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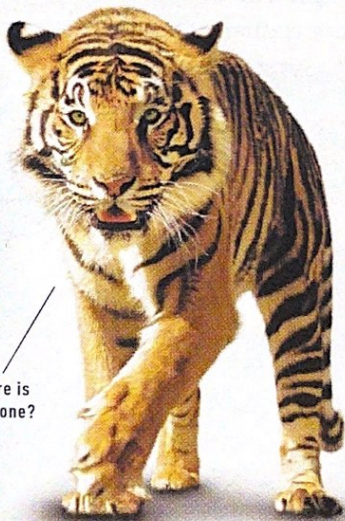
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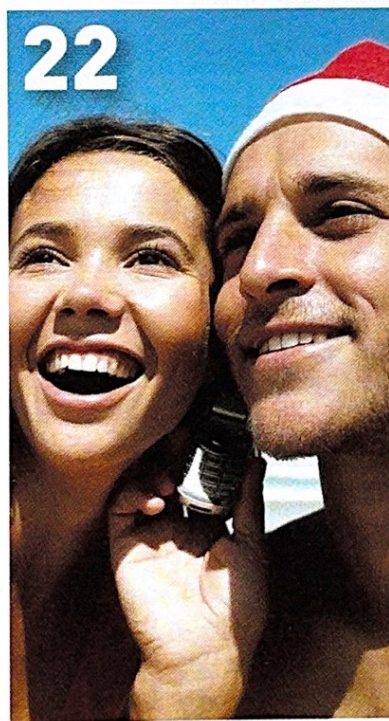
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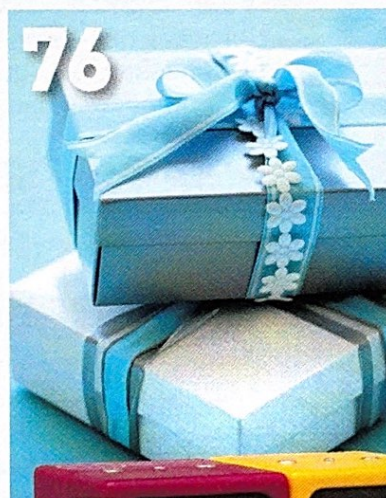
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AUSTRALIAN NetGuide *online*

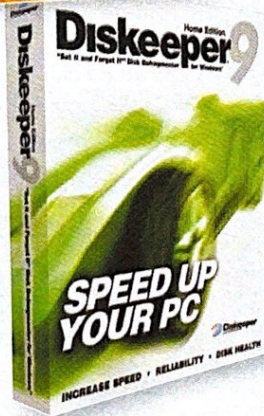
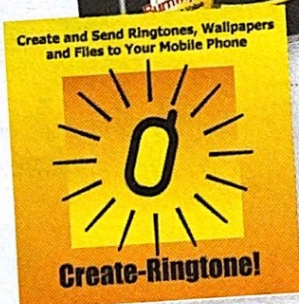
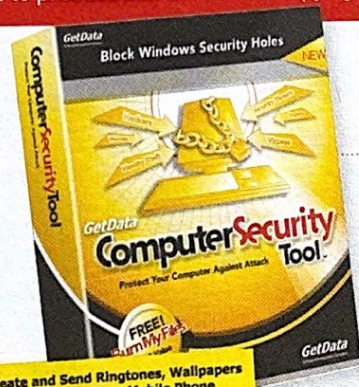
NEW SOFTWARE ON THE SITE THIS MONTH
www.netguide.com.au/software

Issue 103, December 2006

Username: NG1206 Password: 84P2ad7L

Note: The username and password are case sensitive and we only use the number zero in these codes, never the letter 'O'.

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FREE FULL VERSION SOFTWARE

The Computer Security Tool

Software that helps you to identify security weaknesses on your computer and implement recommended changes to your system.

Create-Ringtones 3

A handy program to help you create ringtones from audio files on your computer.

Diskeeper 9.0 Home Edition

An easy-to-use hard disk defragmenting program.

To access the full version software on the NetGuide Web site:

1. Go to www.netguide.com.au/software
2. Click on December 2006, then enter the username and password above when prompted.
This will give you access to download the programs you want. The December full version software will be available using this username and password for six months, allowing you to organise your download schedule to accommodate any limits on your ISP plan.

OTHER NEW SOFTWARE ON THE SITE THIS MONTH:

Blogging and RSS. If you get inspired by our KnowHow feature on blogging and RSS this month (page 46), there is plenty of software on the site that you can use to try out your newly acquired skills. So, why not have a go at creating and posting a blog, or subscribing to some RSS feeds?

Productivity tools. This month, there are trial versions of a great desktop publishing program, a colourful label maker and a popular image viewer/editor. Plus there's a free note-taking program that integrates with the notes feature in Microsoft Outlook.

Consumer/Hobby software includes the latest version of Apple iTunes, a program that turns a spare PC into a second monitor, and easy-to-use software for your Webcam. Plus there's a program that will convert an image file into a paint-by-numbers picture and a learn-to-draw program for children.

Games/Goodies. In the spirit of the festive season, we've included a Christmas game for all the family and lots of other games to keep you amused over the holiday period. There is also a program that will restrict your access to distracting programs (such as the games above!) and two free screensavers.

MAC users will be able to try out their newly acquired knowledge of blogging and RSS feeds with three free programs that help you create, read and organise blogs and RSS feeds. There are also four trial version programs for creating podcasts, blogs, video podcasts and live presentations. Plus four games to play, a free screensaver, a program that lets you customise the look of your Mac and more.

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from the editor

Shop without dropping!

Surely there's not a person on the planet who loves shopping more than me, nor finds more joy in buying gifts for others — I spend all year searching for the perfect present for those near and dear to me. But even I can be intimidated by the feral bargain hunters at Christmas sales. Increasingly, I've been buying my gifts online, but this year, my entire spend has been on the Net. And I'm sure more and more time-poor bargain hunters will be following me down this track. To help you reclaim some precious free time during the Christmas shopping rush — and retain your sanity — we've put together a comprehensive online shopping guide that will not only let you nab some bargains, but also help you with gift ideas for the hard-to-buy-for. We also reveal our pick of the best mobile phones for all tastes and budgets that anyone would be happy to find in their Christmas stocking. And, of course, it won't hurt to drop some hints if you find one you fancy! However, when buying gifts for gamers, it can be particularly hard to know which titles will set their pulses racing, so we've also included our 10 hottest games for 2006 to give you a hand.

And once you've got the new mobile phone, you won't want to be caught dead with the ho-hum ringtones that come bundled with it. To help you stand out in the crowd, we look at the major ringtone download sites and fill you in on what's on offer and how much you can expect to pay for the perfect tune that just screams 'you'.

For those who want to personalise their Web experience, we take you step by step through the process of having news and other content delivered automatically to your PC. We also look at how to find blogs on topics of interest to you, keep up to date with your favourite blogs, and really get into the blogosphere by creating your own online journal.

And the time has finally come to reveal the finalists in our *NetGuide* Australian Web Awards for 2006. Once again, the volume of nominations and the high standard of nominees made whittling down the field to just five finalists in each category a very hard task. Now it's your turn to have your say on who should win the People's Choice Award for this year (see page 14 for voting details).

Until next month, happy surfing (and shopping!).

**NEXT ISSUE ON SALE
December 13, 2006**

Gail

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Do accelerators really work?

Dear **NetGuide**,

I am very happy with my phone company and use the Net via dialup, and we all know how very slow that is.

Could you perhaps do a comparison test on download accelerators and their claims as to their speed on dialup?

I have installed Download Accelerator Plus (DAP), but to unlock the full power of DAP Version 8, I need to buy the full version for \$55.

Being on the pension, this can be a hassle, but can be overcome, if you have a credit card — alas, I don't.

Any local information would be great. **GEORGE**

We plan to look at both download managers and accelerators in our February 2007 issue. /ED

Go local!

Dear **NetGuide**,

Regarding Colin Bull's letter (*NetGuide*, October 2006), most broadband ISPs offer phone bundling cheaper than non-phone bundling and Westnet is just following what is becoming a standard practice among broadband ISPs. I suggest Colin visits www.whirlpool.net.au and uses its Broadband Planner — but above all, do your homework.

email of the month

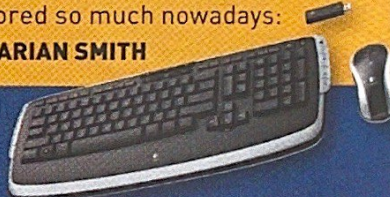
How about it, Telstra?

Dear **NetGuide**,

I'm writing in reply to the reader whose message appears on page 10 of the October 2006 issue of Australian *NetGuide* magazine. I not only think that ISPs have a cheek forcing Internet users, especially those on limited incomes, to accept a phone/Internet 'bundle', but there is another point which wasn't mentioned: Telstra's line rental charge. In the past, pensioners would receive a voucher to cover some of the cost of the line rental, but not now. It is added to our pension (and probably spent) without us being aware of the fact. It's about time Telstra looked seriously at halving the line rental for those of us who rarely make phone calls — mainly using their phone line to access the Internet (hearing-impaired people would welcome this reduction, I'm sure). It seems grossly unfair that, as well as being tied into a phone/Internet bundle they don't want, people on limited incomes, who may make as few as six phone-calls in three months, have to pay the same line rental as more financially-secure folks who make many more calls in a week and can afford to do so. Surely it's time for Telstra and Internet service providers to get their heads together and think seriously about giving pensioners a better price deal for a speedy Broadband service without including phone usage in the deal? We just want fast broadband with spam and anti-virus protection, and let's not forget that other point which seems to be ignored so much nowadays: flexible payment options. **MARIAN SMITH**

WIN

Our **EMAIL OF THE MONTH** winner receives a Logitech Cordless Desktop LX710 laser keyboard and mouse combo, valued at \$149.95.



In my case, I'll be using my local ISP for broadband once our exchange is upgraded (application is being processed now). For the same price (\$35.95, he is offering 256/64Kbps/1G (no phone) — funnily, all his broadband plans require no phone bundling. Other bonuses are I can talk to the owner

personally if I have a problem and I have the convenience of paying direct(cash). **KEITH HOLLEY**

Dear **NetGuide**,

I, too, suffered a similar experience as Colin Bull. I had been with iiNet for several years, having started with a 512Kbps connection. A casual check of the



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iiNet site revealed I could have a 1,500Kbps connection for the same price as my 512Kbps connection, so I upgraded. In July 2006, I was notified that my 1,500Kbps service was to increase by \$20. I could pay the extra or revert to a 512Kbps connection. This was effectively a 33% increase in my monthly subs. Consequently, I changed companies and am now with Vintek, which is relatively close to my home in Adelaide.

BOB HAMDORF

Xbox 360 rort

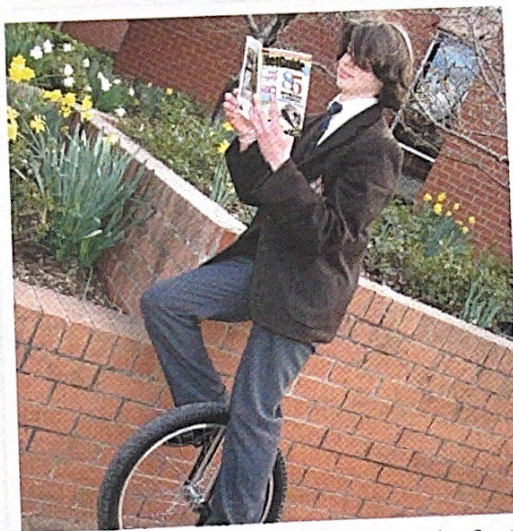
Dear **NetGuide**,
While Alex Kidman gave a

reasonable review of the Xbox360, I feel he left out a major stumbling block that has seen droves leave it on the shelf. Microsoft promised that the Xbox 360 would be fully backward compatible. This is simply untrue. Yes, you can play some original Xbox games on the 360, but not all. Plus — and this is the clincher — you have to connect to the Net, download a patch for each game before you can play it. Not very user-friendly. Microsoft should recall all Xbox 360 units and fix this issue. Surely it cannot be that difficult for them to engineer a hardware solution to enable the 360 to play the original

games. I, for one, will not buy the 360 for this very reason. I have invested a lot of money in games for the Xbox and see no reason why I should have to pander to Microsoft's money-grubbing tactic of forcing us to buy the new games, some of which are already out on the original Xbox. PlayStation will eclipse Microsoft when the PS3 is released. The unit, like the PS2, is fully backward compatible, so you can still play your original PlayStation and PS2 games, as well as the new PS3 lineup. Microsoft, you have dropped the ball and need to pick it up now. **GREG NORRIS** NetGuide

Ricoh Picture of the Month

Here's the latest winner of our Picture of the Month contest.



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Visit www.netguide.com.au/win/captions, enter the username and password on page 6 and leave the wittiest caption you can think of to accompany the photo above. The best one each month wins a one-year subscription to *NetGuide*, valued at \$44.95.

RICOH



THE PRIZE

This month, you could win Ricoh's latest 5.25MP digital camera, the fantastic Caplio R30, valued at \$449, thanks to Ricoh. The super-slim camera features an impressive 5.7X (28mm wide-angle – 160mm telephoto) optical zoom lens, a 2.5in LCD and can record high-quality movies with sound. For more details on the Caplio R30, visit ricoh.com.au/smallbutpowerful or go to www.netguide.com.au/pictureofthemonth.

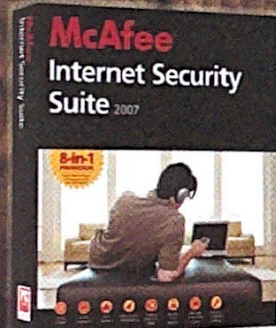
HOW TO ENTER

Email a photo of someone you've caught reading *NetGuide* in an unusual place or situation to netguide@acp.com.au marked 'Ricoh Picture Contest'. If you're using a regular camera, send your photo to Ricoh Picture of the Month Contest, Australian NetGuide, PO Box 4088, Sydney NSW 2001.

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NetGuide Australian Web awards



Thanks to all of you who took the time and trouble to nominate your favourite Web sites in this year's Australian Web Awards. Once again, we had a great response and continue to be impressed with the new sites we've come across during the culling process.

It would have been lovely to acknowledge all the sites that were nominated, but when it came to the crunch, we had to narrow down our selections for each section to just five finalists. To say it was a difficult task is an understatement.

The winners of each category will be announced in our April 2007 issue. In the meantime, we need your help! We need you to get onto the *NetGuide* Web site and vote (once only) for your favourite site of all the finalists. The finalist with the highest number of reader votes will receive the People's Choice Award. To vote go to www.netguide.com.au/webawards. Voting closes on Friday, February 16, 2007 at 5.30pm.

Best search site

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Net nasties


Phishing update

 A new online community aims to combat phishing scams — attempts by cyber criminals to obtain confidential information from Internet users, such as bank account numbers and passwords.

PhishTank (www.phishtank.com) describes itself as 'an information clearinghouse'. Operated by Internet safety firm OpenDNS, it invites people to register (free) so they can submit information about suspected phishing sites they've come across. Other subscribers can then check out the sites themselves, and cast a vote on whether it actually is a scam. This democratic system is aimed at ensuring that legitimate business sites are not maligned, either through ignorance or malice.

Subscribers can also report 'false positives' (non-phishes that have been unjustly identified as such).

Patches update


 Microsoft's latest security bulletin addresses a total of 26 new vulnerabilities detected in its Windows and Office programs.

It's the largest security release for Microsoft this year, and implementing it was hampered temporarily by a technical fault that prevented



the patches being issued in automatic updates.

The bulletin is at <http://tinyurl.com/nyuqf>.

 Users of older Windows systems who are concerned that Microsoft no longer offers security patches for them, may find help from the Zeroday Emergency Response Team, or ZERT.

ZERT is a group of security professionals who offer a service, issuing unofficial security patches when vulnerabilities are detected and users don't want to wait for the official patch. However,


they also offer a lifeline to users whose Windows system is older than, say, XP SP1 and therefore no longer on Microsoft's updates list.

The latest unofficial patch deals with a vulnerability in a Windows component called 'vgx.dll'. This component, which supports Vector Markup Language (VML) graphics, can let in malicious software via a Web site link or an email message.

The ZERT patch for this has been tested on Windows 98, Windows 98SE, Windows Me, Windows 2000 and 2000 SP3. The patch can be downloaded

from the ZERT site (<http://isotf.org/zert>), with the warning that it is not official, and users do so at their own risk. The site also accepts email queries about security concerns.

Hacking update

 Around 15% of malicious Web sites are now created using 'hacker kits', according to security firm Websense.


That figure is treble last year's estimate. The kits, aimed at crooks with minimal knowledge about building Web sites, can infect not only individual PCs, but also servers' hosting sites.

The most popular hacker toolkits are made and sold by Russian entrepreneurs, and include the well-known WebAttacker and the less-familiar Nuclear Grabber (aka Haxdoor). They range in price from \$25 to over \$2,500.

The creators of these

kits openly boast how well their code evades anti-virus scanners, and advertise exploits of both long-patched and unpatched vulnerabilities in browsers, particularly Microsoft's Internet Explorer.


Read the latest Websense Security Trends report at <http://tinyurl.com/k6qxb>.

 People who use their work computers to access social networking sites may expose their employer's computer system to malicious attacks.

The warning comes from the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA), which says there are increasing signs that hackers are taking advantage of community sites. It says office workers who commit such misuse are also leaving themselves vulnerable to identity theft.

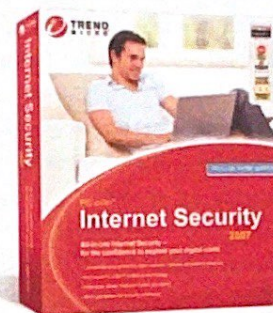
A study conducted by the NCSA reveals that of those

Spam warning

 A new guise for spammers is junk mail purporting to be research.

Anti-virus firm Sophos warns that an email campaign, asking recipients to forward all their chain mail email to a researcher called Gemma, is actually a scam most likely set up by spammers to harvest live email addresses.

The email reads: "I would be very grateful if you would be kind enough to forward absolutely anything and everything that remotely resembles chain mail, forwards of any type (even the rude ones). This project is based over the next year and I need at least 500,000 forwards for this project to be a success, so please keep them coming, the more the better."



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adults who have access to a computer at work, 46% log onto social network sites from the office, and 74% of those provide some sort of personal information, such as their email address, name, birthday, and even social security number.

Eighty-three percent of adults who use social network sites have downloaded content from another user's profile and 31% have responded to phishy unsolicited email or instant messages.

The study questioned over 2,000 American adults aged at least 18 years.

Adverts update

Search engines aren't doing enough to discourage unethical advertising, says Internet researcher Ben Edelman (www.benedelman.org), who has issued a report targeting pay-per-click ads.

These ads, sometimes known as 'sponsored links', pop up in searches, triggered by certain keywords. For instance, if you search for digital cameras, you'll often see a series of links either at the top of your search results, or in a sidebar, headed with those search words and encouraging you to click on the link for further information. Doing this will take you to an online store. It may also attract cookies and other tracking software that sends

details back to the advertiser about your online habits. Search engines like Google usually identify these links as being sponsored (Google puts them on a different-coloured background). However, these links are also often buried in the text of Web pages. Usually they're highlighted to indicate a link underneath — holding your cursor over them should bring up the concealed address.

Edelman's concern is that many such ads break the rules of legal and ethical advertising; for instance, offering services purporting to be 'free', when in fact anyone signing up can find themselves incurring substantial, previously undisclosed charges.

Companies like Google insist they police online ads very carefully, but Edelman cites more than 30 ads he claims could violate the rules, and says tougher enforcement is needed.

IM update



As US Congressman Mark Foley recently discovered, exchanges via instant messaging (IM) services have a habit of hanging around.

Foley's salacious chats with teenage congressional pages forced his resignation after they fell into the hands of broadcaster ABC. It seems Foley assumed that once despatched, the messages sort of... disappeared. Not so.

The recipient of an IM message is quite capable of saving a 'hard copy', and many well-known IM programs contain logging software that allows time-dated messages to be saved on computers. It's thought that some of Foley's correspondents saved these messages for a rainy day, or the chance of some payback.


Spam update



Mobile users who make heavy use of text messaging are being warned that spammers are after them.

Some Verizon Wireless and Sprint Nextel (US) subscribers recently received unsolicited text messages promoting stocks in a 'clean energy' company whose stock market listings and telephone contacts proved elusive. Verizon is suing the shadowy firm, which has sent over half a million such text messages on its network.

US wireless subscribers generally pay about 10 cents for every text message they receive, and wireless operators fear spamming could discourage text messaging and therefore hurt revenue.

Mobile users who get unsolicited text messages are urged to report them immediately to their service provider. 



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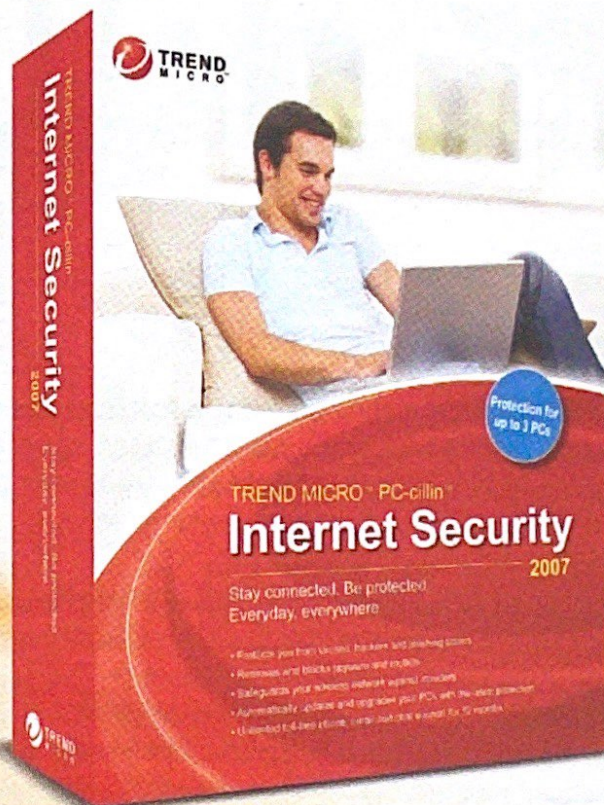
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Buyers' guide

MOBILE PHONES HOTTEST GAMES | REVIEWS



Looking to buy a mobile phone for that special someone for Christmas (and, of course, there's no-one more special than you!)? **ALEX KIDMAN** puts 13 of the latest models through their paces.

Christmas comes but once a year, and based on the trends of previous years, we're willing to bet that more than a few mobile phones will find their way into Santa's little red sack this December. According to figures on the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association Web site, Australians purchased more than 4 million handsets in 2002, and it's hard to imagine that we've slowed down since then. We've assembled 13 different models to pick from, but before you make your choice you should consider the mobile market as a whole. All mobile phones are created equal, but...

The first thing to realise is that for all but the most esoteric uses, all mobiles sold currently offer the same basic range of services. Calling is obviously a given, as is SMS usage, and even the cheapest mobiles tend to support MMS messages — that's SMS-style quick messages with photo or video content tacked on. Even higher-end features such as Bluetooth connectivity, decent cameras and MP3 playback are filtering down to cheaper mobiles. There has been considerable expansion into additional services for mobile phones — a 2006 survey carried out by the Australian Interactive Media

Industry Association suggests that only 40% of phone owners utilise their phones solely for calling purposes. That leaves the other 60% using SMS, MMS, video calling, music, games and online functions. There's also been a downward shift in prices for higher-end, so-called 'smartphones'. Smartphones are typically the fusion of older PDA-style functions into a mobile factor. Smartphones still tend towards the higher end of the income bracket, but we've included a couple in this roundup just in case you're feeling particularly generous.

Buying a phone, whether it's as a gift for someone else, or even better, as a gift to yourself — and let's be honest, they're the best kind — is as much (if not more) a matter of aesthetics as functionality. There would be nothing worse than little Timmy unwrapping his Christmas mobile phone and finding a pink Barbie-esque mobile instead of the sleek black phone of doom he was rather hoping to get.

Because we've reviewed phones covering a wide range of features and price points, we've not awarded a 'best in test' out of fairness.

Reviews

As always, the prices quoted in the reviews are recommended retail as quoted by vendors. Street prices are invariably lower, so we recommend that you shop around for the best deal.

Motorola MOTOPEBL

RRP \$540.54

WEB www.motorola.com.au

Somebody should buy Motorola some consonants, but that aside, the MOTOPEBL is a smooth-looking clamshell-style mobile phone with integrated Bluetooth, MP3 playback and still and video camera capabilities.

PROS By far the best bit of the PEBL is its design, with a smooth pebble-like surface that lets it slip into pockets and bags easily, along with a solid flip-up hinge.

CONS The camera is a paltry VGA model, so snapshots and videos tend to look grainy and

**Motorola
MOTORAZR V3i**
iTunes compatible



**Motorola
MOTOPEBL**
For the style-
conscious

ordinary. There's only a small amount of onboard memory, and no external memory slot.

VERDICT One for the very style-conscious crowd.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●○○

Motorola MOTORAZR V3i

RRP \$735.74

WEB www.motorola.com.au

The RAZR V3i has one key feature that other phones would kill for: iTunes compatibility. Aside from that key selling point, it's a super-slim clamshell phone with a 1.2MP camera, quad-band GSM coverage and Bluetooth connectivity.

PROS iTunes compatibility makes it an excellent music phone, especially when you consider that iTunes music is much cheaper than that sold by any of the other music carriers.

NETGUIDE RATING

Essential

Very Good

Good

Fair

Don't Bother

MOBILE PHONES HOTTEST GAMES | REVIEWS

CONS You can only synchronise 100 iTunes tracks to the RAZR V3i — and you'll need a larger memory card to do that.

VERDICT A superb phone for the already iPod-crazed.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●

Sony Ericsson V630i

RRP \$449

WEB www.vodafone.com.au

The V630i is a Vodafone-exclusive 3G phone with a stark, almost industrial design and a fairly hefty feature set, which includes a 2.0MP camera, Bluetooth, MP3 playback, Web browsing, email and the ability to drag and drop files from a connected PC.

PROS The V630i's additional features work well, especially the camera, which gave us clear shots in our testing.

CONS The design is either heavy industrial chic, or just plain ugly — you decide.

VERDICT Not a revolutionary phone; just one that works well and with a distinctive look that you'll either love or hate.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●

Sony Ericsson W700i

RRP \$420 via Virgin Mobile (w/speakers)

WEB www.virginmobile.com.au

The W700i isn't a Virgin-exclusive phone, but the review model we tested

came from Virgin, and the bundle that they sell with this Walkman-branded, musically-inclined phone includes a small but powerful set of travel speakers, making it a good gift option. The W700i is a Bluetooth-capable phone in the familiar 'candybar' form factor.

PROS Music playback is of good quality, as is battery life, even with heavy speaker use.

CONS The dialling keys and control joystick are rather small and fiddly.

VERDICT A good gift for the musically-crazed member of your family.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●



Outright vs Plan vs Prepaid?

When choosing a mobile phone for someone else as a gift, you'll need to consider how you plan to actually buy the phone. If you buy outright, you'll pay the highest upfront cost, but you're then handing over control of the phone to your gift recipient, who will need to organise a SIM card and calling plan.

There are considerable savings to be made on a monthly plan, especially with the current trend for mobile phone caps, where you pay a set fee per month for a larger dollar 'amount' of services. The catch with monthly plans is that they lock you into a particular phone vendor and handset, so if you want to change, or worse still break or lose the phone, you're stuck paying a set amount per month.

The final option, prepaid mobiles, are typically cheaper than buying outright, but they're also generally locked to one provider, and fees may be involved if you want to switch to another carrier. It's best to check first when buying, so that you've got a clear picture as to what can be done with the phone and where the financial responsibilities lie.

Talking face to face

EASY-TO-USE MICROSOFT LIFECAM MAKES IT FUN TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR LOVED ONES VIA THE NET

Can anyone still remember the days when keeping in touch at Christmas meant mailing cards weeks ahead and waiting for jammed phone lines to clear? Now we can't live without the internet, email is second nature and instant messaging connects us within keystrokes.

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to-use Microsoft LifeCam. Imagine face-to-face chats with a whole room full of relatives, or sharing silly season stories with friends across town or around the world – all via crystal-clear video and sharp audio. You'll feel like you're right there!

A gift of a Microsoft LifeCam this Christmas can bring together family and friends from near and far. You will soon be seeing, hearing and sharing life in real time – together.

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- High Definition sensor* for true 1.3 megapixel video and 5.0 megapixel interpolated** photos
- Automatic face tracking* so you don't disappear off-screen
- Automatically adjusts for low-light conditions

HEAR MORE

- Crystal-clear audio superior to normal phone sound
- Built-in unidirectional microphone lets more than one person join in the conversation
- Microphone also features acoustic noise cancellation, which blocks out excessive background noise for clearer communication

SHARE LIFE

- Windows Live Call Button lets you see who's online with one touch
- LifeCam dashboard has built-in special effects to add entertainment to your communication
- One-touch blogging lets you post photos, blogs, scrapbooks and personal music lists



GET ONE-TOUCH ACCESS TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Microsoft LifeCams make video calling simple by connecting direct to the world's largest instant messaging community, Windows Live Messenger. One touch of the Windows Live Call Button lets you see which of your friends and loved ones are online, and you're on your way to a face-to-face chat via video call. Microsoft LifeCams also work with other instant messaging programs. Get started today with the LifeCam VX-3000 (pictured above), at \$99.95 rrp.

*This feature only available on Microsoft LifeCam VX 6000. **Not available when capturing video at 1.3 megapixel resolution. One megapixel = 1,000,000 pixels. Less resolution available when sending video via instant messaging.

NETGUIDE RATING

Essential

Very Good

Good

Fair

Don't Bother

MOBILE PHONES HOTTEST GAMES | REVIEWS

LG Chocolate KG800

RRP \$799

WEB www.lge.com.au

LG's KG800 contains no chocolate, and comes in black or white, not brown. Leaving descriptive semantics aside, it's a visually impressive slider phone that works on the GSM network. It comes with a 1.3MP camera, MP3 playback and Bluetooth connectivity.

Sagem my501C

Good battery life;
good value



LG Chocolate KG800

Stylish slider phone;
touchpad controls

PROS Style is the KG800's best friend, especially with the ultra-cool, touch-sensitive control pad that activates when the phone is slid up.

CONS There's no external memory storage, and like most shiny black tech objects, the KG800 is a magnet for fingerprints — even more so, given the touchpad controls.

VERDICT An essential purchase for the technophile in your life who just happens to be a fashionista as well.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●

Sagem myC5-2v

RRP \$199

WEB www.sagem.com.au

The myC5-2v is an inexpensive phone available in a variety of colours — our review sample came in a rather subdued pink. It features a basic VGA camera, MP3 playback and a small external LCD showing time, signal strength and battery life.

PROS The buttons are quite large for such a small phone, and the interface is no-frills — but that also equates to no-fuss.

CONS Build quality is only average, and you won't particularly impress anyone with the myC5-2v's sense of style.

VERDICT Decent value for the money, but nothing terribly exciting.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●

Sagem my501C

RRP \$299

WEB www.sagem.com.au

Sagem's my501C does cost a little more than the plainer myC5-2v, but it's clear to see where the money went; it's a better-designed phone with a larger feature set, including a 1.3MP camera, Bluetooth, MP3 playback and support for external microSD memory cards.

Sagem myC5-2v

Decent value; no frills

PROS Like the myC5-2v, the my501C has large, easy-to-use dialling buttons. The menu structures are easy to follow, and battery life in our tests was very good.

CONS The camera is still on the average side.

VERDICT Good value considering the relatively low asking price.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

Nokia N73

RRP \$949

WEB www.nokia.com.au

The N73 isn't what you'd call an inexpensive mobile, but for the asking price you get an exceptionally good 3.2MP Carl Zeiss lens built into a 3G phone with a large, clear display screen.

PROS The N73 is packed with features and buttons to activate them simply. The screen is good for viewing even in the brightest light. Combine that with the lens and you've got an exceptional camera phone indeed.



Nokia N73
Expensive, but
great features

CONS The abundance of buttons means that they're all rather small, and as such, a bit fiddly in some cases. The camera is very good, but lacks a true integrated flash unit. It's also hard to look past the asking price.

VERDICT A great phone, but with a high price tag.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

Nokia 6151

RRP \$449

WEB www.nokia.com.au

The 6151 is the much simpler 3G cousin of the N73, with a simpler menu structure, a 1.3MP camera, support for Push To Talk and Bluetooth, as well as memory expansion via microSD cards.

PROS The 6151 is a beautifully simple phone to use, from its slightly larger than normal dialling buttons to its very simple menu structures that more closely mirror Nokia's interfaces of

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Nokia 6151
Easy-to-use,
inexpensive
3G phone

years gone by than their newer menu bar-style approach.

CONS The 1.3MP camera on the 6151 is fairly ordinary, especially for a 3G model.

VERDICT An inexpensive entry to the 3G field matched with an easy-to-use interface makes this a good choice for 3G newbies.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

ASUS P525
Competitive
smartphone



Samsung Z400

RRP \$749

WEB www.samsung.com.au

The Z400 is a 3G phone with a sliding phone mechanism that hides the dialling pad and answers/hangs up. It includes a 2.0MP camera, MP3 player, document viewer, Bluetooth and expansion via a microSD card slot.

PROS The Z400 has a compact design that's very easy to learn to use.

CONS Battery life in our tests was rather poor compared to the rest of the pack.

VERDICT A good, but not great, 3G phone.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●○○

Samsung D900

RRP \$699

WEB www.samsung.com.au

Samsung bills the D900 as the world's slimmest slider phone. It includes a 3MP camera, Bluetooth, MP3 playback, microSD memory card expansion and an integrated document viewer for the business types.

Samsung Z400
Compact design;
easy to use



Samsung D900
Style and
functionality



PROS The D900's a great mix of business and personal features in a stylish package. Battery life and speaker clarity were excellent.

CONS Video capture was a touch jerky, and while it's very slim, it's a bit on the wide side.

VERDICT A very good buy for those who want style and functionality.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

ASUS P525

RRP \$999

WEB www.asus.com.au

The P525 justifies its asking price — the equal highest in our roundup — as it's a smartphone, marrying quad-band mobile phone access (which will work practically anywhere there's a phone signal) and a 2.0MP camera with the Windows Mobile 5.0 platform.

PROS The P525's large screen makes it a good business phone, as it's just as easy to review documents or surf the Web as it would be on a comparable PDA.

CONS Despite its large size, the phone dialling pad is rather small. The touchscreen interface is neat, but it's a pain for longer typing periods.

VERDICT A competitive entry into the smartphone market.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

HP iPAQ rw6828

RRP \$999

WEB www.hp.com.au

The iPAQ rw6828 shares the same price tag, and many of the same features as ASUS's P525 smartphone, albeit in a much smaller unit. It's a Windows Mobile 5.0 PDA with tri-band GSM phone capabilities and a 2.0MP camera on the rear of the unit.

PROS The smaller size makes it much easier to pop into a pocket than the P525, and the screen protector gives it a decent chance of remaining scratch-free. Setting it up as a joint phone/PDA or even as an email client is surprisingly easy.

CONS There's no dialling pad at all, so you've got to use a touchscreen for all dialling, which can be a chore.

VERDICT A close race, but the rw6828 takes it from the P525 by the smallest margin as Santa's smartphone of choice.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○ NetGuide



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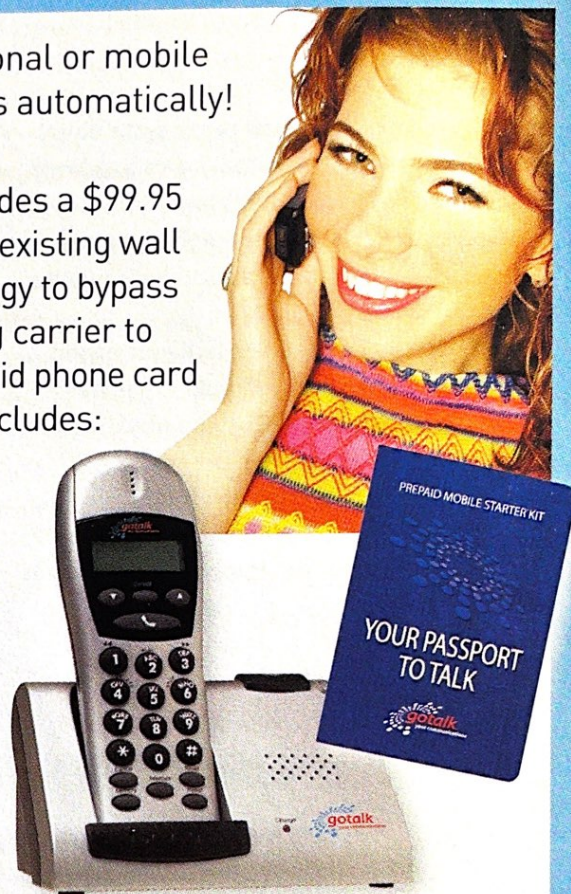
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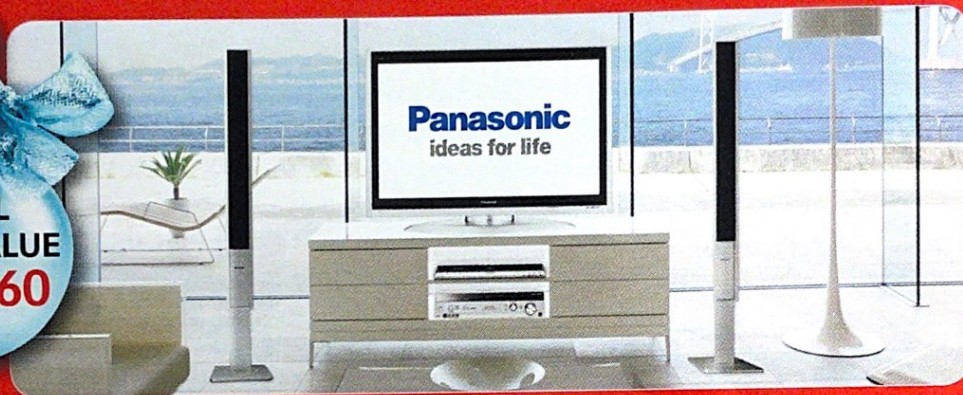
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10 hottest games for 2006



Still looking for the must-have gift for that special gamer in your life? ALEX KIDMAN reveals his top 10 games of 2006 to help solve the problem of what to put under the tree this Christmas.

In many ways, 2006 has been a very quiet year in gaming. On the PC front, World Of Warcraft (WoW) continued to eat up days of PC gamer time, with many other titles simply being an afterthought. That's quite an achievement for a two-year-old game of any type, let alone one that requires a monthly subscription. With an expansion just around the corner, WoW would still make a great gift for the PC gamer in your life — as long as you didn't want to see much of them afterwards, as they'll almost certainly end up glued to their screen before the wrapping paper's even hit the floor.

On the console front, 2006 saw the launch of Microsoft's Xbox 360 console, along with an exceptional drought in

terms of original titles for the original Xbox — a bit disappointing given how well the original machine did locally. At the same time, Sony's ploughed on with the ageing PlayStation2, and recent announcements mean it'll be well into 2007 before the PlayStation3 hits these shores. At the same time, Nintendo's scored well with its portable DS system, while the GameCube is all but gone from shop shelves, with the follow-up Wii console due in early December — just in time for Christmas shoppers.

Here's our roundup of the 10 top games of 2006, in no particular order. Any one of them — or multiples, if you're so inclined — would make excellent gifts for gamers of just about any type, and the multi-format nature of most of them means that there should be something here for every gamer — or game giver — this festive season.



Loco Roco

(Sony PSP)

RRP \$49.95

WEB <http://tinyurl.com/lep2y>

Loco Roco doesn't sound like much of a game — guide your blobby cute creatures from one side of a level to another, using only the

Sony PlayStation Portable's trigger buttons — but a combination of super-cute design, quirky audio and a simple to learn but terribly engaging play mechanic make this the clear frontrunner for anyone with Sony's portable games machine on their mind.

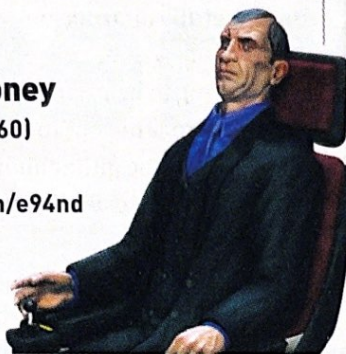
Hitman: Blood Money

(PC, PS2, Xbox, Xbox 360)

RRP \$79.95

WEB <http://tinyurl.com/e94nd>

Hitman: Blood Money isn't a game for everybody — you do play a professional assassin, for a start, and a wire garotte is just part of your everyday clobber — but as a fine mix of tense stealth action, forward planning and some subtly dark humour, it's a great title to give to your favourite mature gamer.



Dr Kawashima's Brain Training

(Nintendo DS)

RRP \$49.95

WEB www.braintraining.com.au



Ever since the days of Space Invaders, gaming's been blamed for rotting the brains of aficionados. Nintendo's answer to that this year was the addictive and often challenging Brain Training, which presents you with maths, comprehension and even Sudoku puzzles to keep your brain as fresh as it was when it came out of the jar. Being told you have a decrepit brain is somewhat disheartening, until you work your brain age down, and that's what will keep you coming back to Brain Training, time and time again.

Taito Legends 2

(PS2, Xbox)

RRP \$49.95

WEB www.taitolegends2.com

Retro gaming collections are nothing new — Namco's been putting out the same four or five titles



on various formats for what seems like decades now — but Taito re-wrote the rules of retro compilations with the excellent Legends and Legends 2 packs. Legends 2 features no less than 39 classic arcade games, some great and some not-so great, although your own rosy-tinted memories may differ from ours. However, at less than \$2 per game, the value in Legends 2 is undeniable.



WIN

Hitman: Blood Money

Thanks to Atari (www.atari.com.au), we have three copies of Hitman: Blood Money, valued at \$79.95, to give away to readers this month. To enter, go to the NetGuide Web site (www.netguide.com.au/win), enter the username and password from page 6, and enter your details. Entries close December 12, 2006. For terms and conditions see www.netguide.com.au/win/terms/terms.php.

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The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion

(PC, Xbox 360)

RRP \$89.95

WEB <http://tinyurl.com/5plh6>

Bethesda's massive first-person RPG title can literally eat up days of time as you increase the skills of your character, be it a sneaky assassin, a fire-throwing mage or a sword-wielding orc. In a nice touch, you can even be all three. The PC version is one of this year's most heavily user-modified titles, with modifications that change the core game in all sorts of interesting ways, increasing Oblivion's lifespan — and thus value — enormously.

Guitar Hero/Guitar Hero II

(PS2)

RRP \$129.95

WEB www.guitarherogame.com

Big game props are usually a fizzer, even for the

games they're intended for, but Guitar Hero — and the sequel, which should be available by the time you read this — is different. As the name suggests, it comes with a massive plastic guitar that you use to play classic rock tracks to a carefully guarded meter. While it sounds silly — and to a certain extent is — there's little that's going to be more fun than watching Grandma rocking out to "Smoke On The Water" and twirling the guitar above her head for extra points. It's memories like that that Christmas is truly made of.

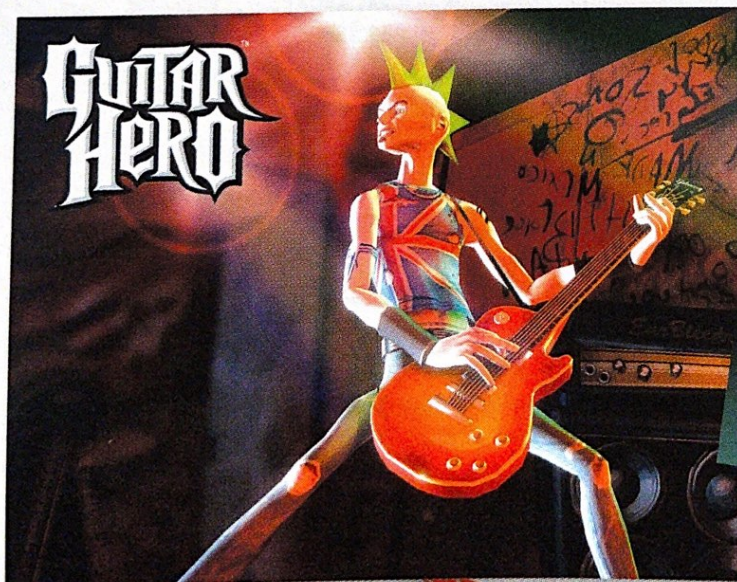
Lego Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy

(PC, PS2, Xbox, Nintendo DS, Gameboy Advance)

RRP \$69.95-\$99.95

WEB www.lucasarts.com/games/legostarwarsii

The sequel to Lego Star Wars is a great game for young and old gamers alike — younger gamers will like the game's friendly pace and simple humour, while older gamers will love the fact that it's based on the older, better *Star Wars* movies, albeit with a humorous and Lego-centric slant. Whether it's blowing up a million-block Death Star or unexpectedly coming across a Stormtrooper in a Sauna, Lego Star Wars II delivers humour and good gameplay in abundance.



Reviews

SOFTWARE

Trend Micro PC-cillin Internet Security 2007

RRP \$99.95 1 year/3 users

WEB www.trendmicro.com.au

It's pretty much a given that each year the major anti-virus vendors will offer up a slightly shinier package of online protection utilities, with a yearly suffix at the end. Trend Micro knows not to buck the trend, and hence we've got PC-cillin Internet Security 2007, which includes anti-virus, firewall, anti-phishing, wireless security and even mobile phone security modules, all wrapped up in a single program.

PROS The smallest install price covers 3 PCs; this works well within the suite's promise to protect home networks, not just individual PCs. The interface is clean and easy to use.

CONS Some of the spyware it picked up in our scans linked to explanation pages that failed to load during our test, making us unsure if it was correctly identifying malware.

VERDICT A good package if you're running a multi-PC household.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

Reviews by Alex Kidman

Corel Paint Shop Pro Photo XI

RRP \$199

WEB www.comm-unique.com.au

The latest version of Corel's easy-to-use Paint Shop application undergoes yet another rename and another moniker, adding a photo organiser, new image manipulation features and the ability to automatically download photos directly from compatible cameras or memory cards.

PROS Paint Shop Pro continues to be very easy to use and learn, and the new organisation tools make sifting through hundreds of photos of your kids a (relatively) painless task.

CONS As with many image applications, you'll need a lot of PC grunt — or a lot of patience — with some image manipulation features.

VERDICT A solid challenger to the Photoshop Elements crown.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

Roxio Easy Media Creator 9

RRP \$159.99

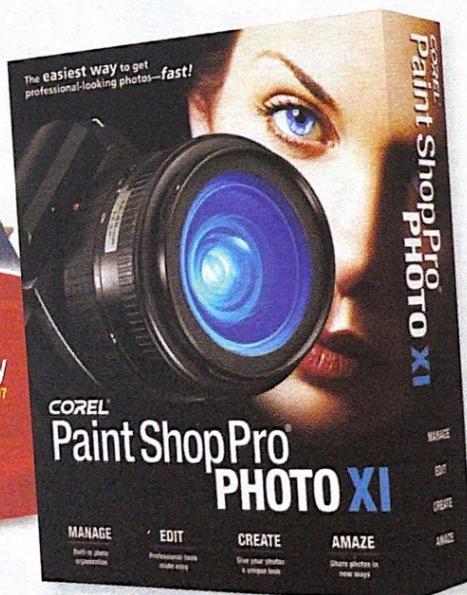
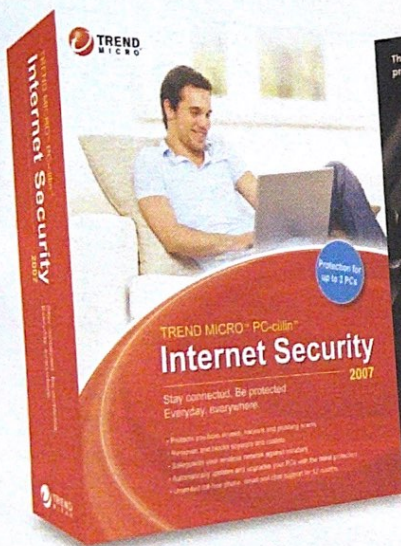
WEB www.roxio.com

When it says Easy Media Creator on the box, it doesn't lie — EMC 9 supports DVD/CD burning, photo editing, slideshow creation, HD Video,

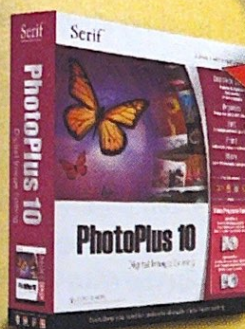
iPod/PSP/mobile phone video, MP3 tag editing and even file backup from within one program suite.

PROS The range of supported activities is huge and encompasses most home multimedia uses, in a similar fashion to Nero's suite offerings. The inclusion of HD video editing is a very nice plus in a package at this price point.

CONS Some tasks, including theoretically



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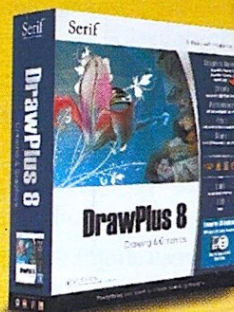


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NETGUIDE RATING

Essential Very Good Good Fair Don't Bother

MOBILE PHONES | HOTTEST GAMES | **REVIEWS**



easier stuff such as photo editing, can be comparatively sluggish.

VERDICT A great tool for home multimedia and backup chores.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●

HARDWARE

TDK Xa-40 2.1Ch speakers

RRP \$59.95

WEB www.tdk.com.au

Most speaker systems — even simple 2.1 channel ones — can be a mess of cables, but not so the TDK Xa-40 Tremor speakers; they're just a simple box that contains two full speakers and a subwoofer, all styled rather like the very popular iPod. They're available in silver, orange or a particularly lurid green side style. Guess which review sample colour we had?

PROS Setup was very simple — power, a single

audio-in cable at the rear and a volume control on the front is all you've got to worry about, and the speaker itself is small enough to be suitably portable. Audio quality was acceptably good from portable music sources, although audiophiles would probably prefer something with a little better clarity.

CONS The power cable on our review sample didn't snap cleanly into place at the rear, which looked a little poor. With only a volume control, you're limited to the sound output options of whatever you're sending out from.

VERDICT A good compact speaker system for the asking price.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●

Maxtor OneTouch III FireWire 400/USB 2.0 500G

RRP \$469

WEB www.maxtor.com.au

Maxtor's OneTouch III looks like a small concrete building block, but within you'll find a 500G hard drive and software designed for easy backup of all your precious data.

PROS Setting up the drive and the software is quite easy, and the inbuilt scheduling means that, as long as you keep it connected, it should manage all your backups seamlessly and in a



manner where you can just set and forget it. Both FireWire and USB 2.0 interfaces are supported on the one unit.

CONS Nobody could call the OneTouch III's casing attractive, and likewise it's not a small unit, so you'll preferably want a small, out of the way bit of your home office to hide it in.

VERDICT Everyone should back-up, and nobody does. The OneTouch III is an attractive solution to this problem, even if it isn't an attractive drive.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

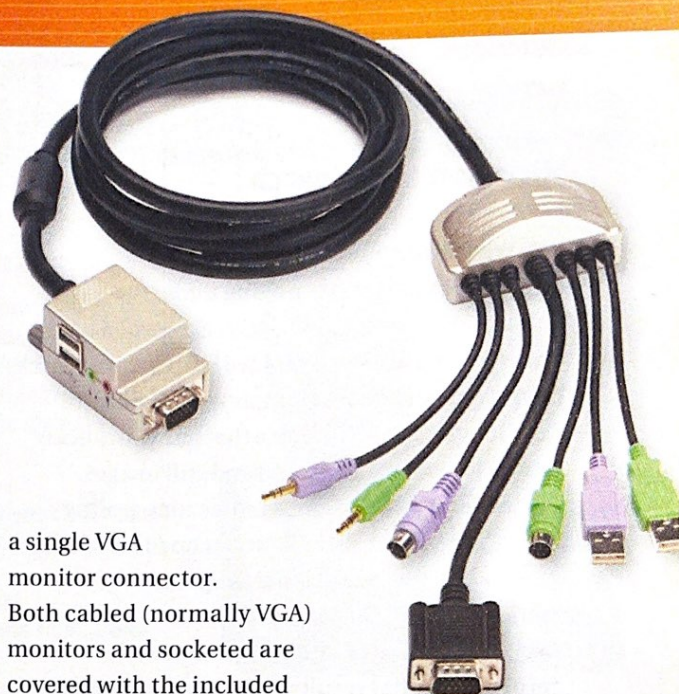
Banksia Digital OctoLink

RRP \$49

WEB www.netcomm.com.au/banksia

If you've got a desktop PC with a tower that sits under your desk, you've no doubt encountered the not-so-pleasant phenomenon of having to plug in a new cable, complete with back-wrenching, hot dusty environments and plenty of muttered swearing as you struggle to find that USB port in the dark. Banksia's OctoLink cable is a cute solution to the problem, as it shifts a number of vital ports from the back of your desktop up to your monitor — and hopefully within better reach.

PROS The OctoLink covers PS/2 mouse and keyboard ports, as well as two USB ports and



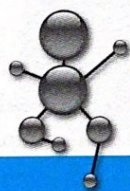
a single VGA monitor connector.

Both cabled (normally VGA) monitors and socketed are covered with the included adaptors. The cable is shielded to reduce interference with monitor and speaker outputs.

CONS The cable is very thick, and passing it up through some desks can be very tough indeed. The two USB ports are quite close together, which can be a problem if you're using thick-plugged USB devices.

VERDICT A good solution to an age-old cabling problem.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○



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NETGUIDE RATING

Essential

Very Good

Good

Fair

Don't Bother

MOBILE PHONES | HOTTEST GAMES | REVIEW

INTERNET

Microsoft Live Search

RRP Free

WEB www.live.com

As part of its online rebranding under the 'Live' banner, Microsoft has recently relaunched its search efforts as Microsoft Live Search. Live Search boasts a very clean and simple — and, dare we say, Google-like — interface that lets you quickly search for Web pages, video and still images.

PROS The image search has some nice scaling technologies and a simple scratchpad for saving images you like in a sidebar. Impressively, it works quite well in Firefox, too.

CONS At the time of writing, Live Search returned similar results to Google, but fewer of them for certain test searches — and if you need more indepth searching, that could mean missing a good result.

VERDICT Live Search is a very capable search engine.

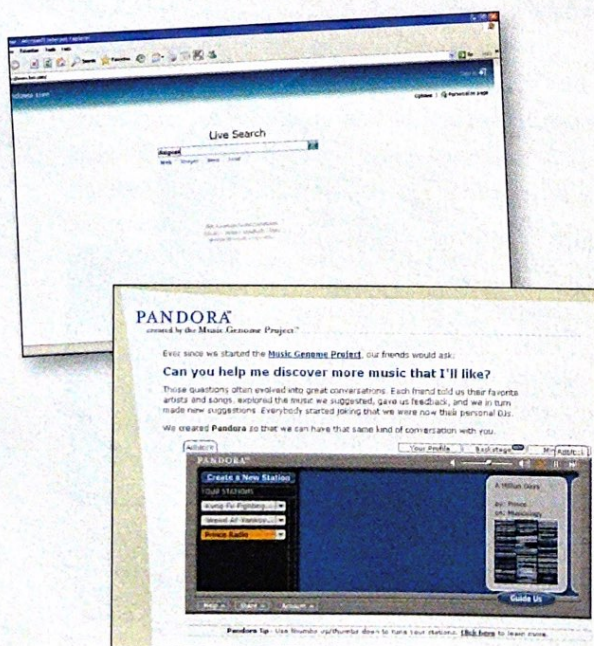
NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●○

Pandora

RRP Free (ish)

WEB www.pandora.com

Pandora bills itself as a "Music Discovery Service".



It's a Web-embedded audio player and search engine that uses some clever music classification rules to create streaming Web radio based around your artist or track selection, using criteria based on what's known about a particular musician or musical style.

PROS Pandora is an excellent way to expand your artist horizons while still staying within genres that you already like, and the player worked seamlessly during our test period.

CONS The free version is ad-supported and, at the time of writing, it wasn't possible to buy a subscription, as they're US-only.

VERDICT A superb way to expand your musical horizons using technology.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●●

ASUS WL-600g All-In-1 Wireless ADSL2/2+ Home Gateway

RRP \$289

WEB www.asus.com.au

The WL-600g

is a 'Swiss

army knife'

of home

routing; wired

100Mbps,

wireless 802.11g

and USB print server in

one simple little white box.

PROS Setup was quick and easy, and the inclusion of USB ports that can be used for network storage or printer sharing makes this quite a capable little home gateway.

CONS The configuration interface assumes quite a bit of arcane routing knowledge in some areas. As a single-antenna router, it lags behind the newer crop of MIMO-enabled and Draft 802.11n routers in terms of signal strength and reach. We did encounter some problems with connectivity via ADSL2+ during our tests.

VERDICT Good, as long as your wireless needs are relatively low-key.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●○ **NetGuide**



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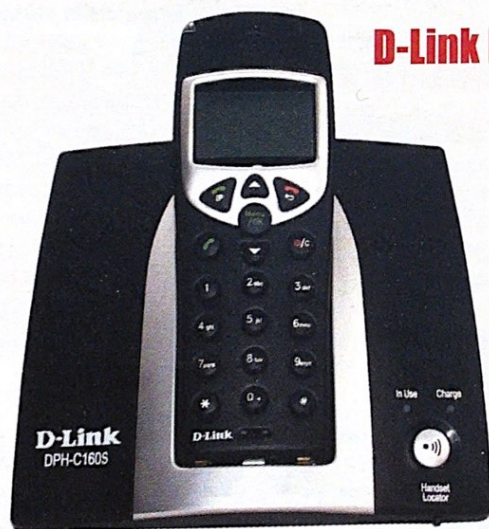
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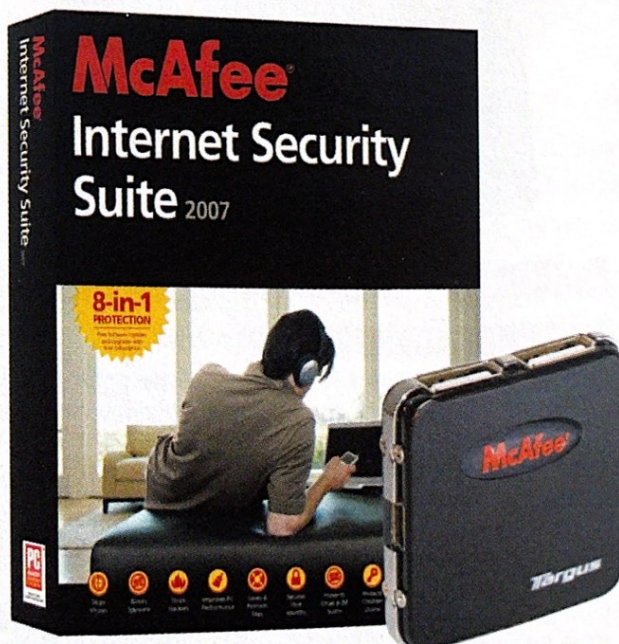
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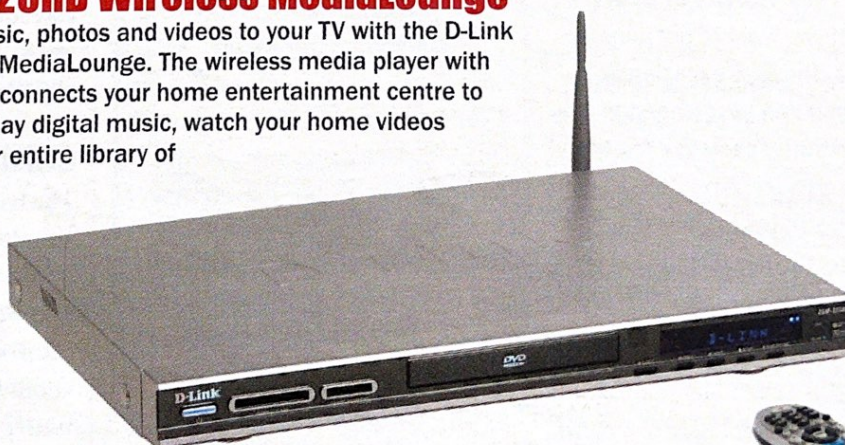
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Personalising the Internet

RSS feeds and blogs might sound like confusing concepts, but they can help you get much more out of the Internet and make it much more relevant to your needs. **ANGUS KIDMAN** shows you how.

If you're a frequent Internet user (and why else would you be reading this magazine?), then you've probably noticed links that say something like 'RSS feed' on an increasing number of Web sites. While you may well have dismissed this as just another example of incomprehensible technology jargon, RSS feeds are in fact a highly useful means of staying up to date

with your favourite sites. In this article, we'll explain how you can make use of them.

Another increasingly popular online concept is blogging. Blogs have been the subject of huge amounts of hype in recent years, with some people claiming that they will eventually replace mainstream media. While that may be a stretch, there's no doubt that they have become

an influential part of the online landscape.

In essence, a blog is an online diary, which can also include pictures, video content and links to other sites of interest. Setting up your own blog is fairly easy, and you'll find everything you need to know (including how blogs themselves make use of RSS) in the following handy step-by-step guide.

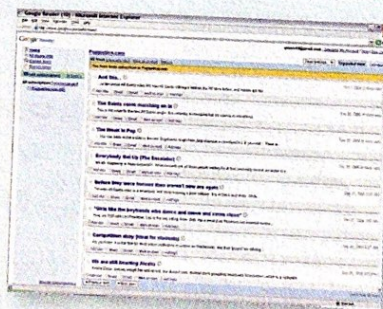
Together, RSS and blogging can help you have a much more personal Internet experience, one that's tailored to your own needs and interests and lets you contribute to the online world, rather than just passively absorbing it.

Beginner Tip

The Web version

If you want to get a taste of the RSS experience, you don't even need to install specialised reader software. A number of Web sites provide online RSS aggregation, usually by letting you set up an account to store details of your favourite site feeds. Web-based aggregators are handy if you want to be able to access your feed list from any PC, but (unlike software readers) don't offer the ability to read articles when you're not actually connected.

A handy example is Google Reader (<http://reader.google.com>), which uses the same account details as other Google services such as Gmail and Google Groups.



Getting to know RSS

The basic idea behind RSS is a simple one. Rather than having to re-visit your favourite sites every day to see if there's new information on them, those sites should be able to automatically notify you whenever new content has appeared. RSS essentially provides a standard

format that sites can use for that information. This listing of updates is known as an 'RSS feed'.

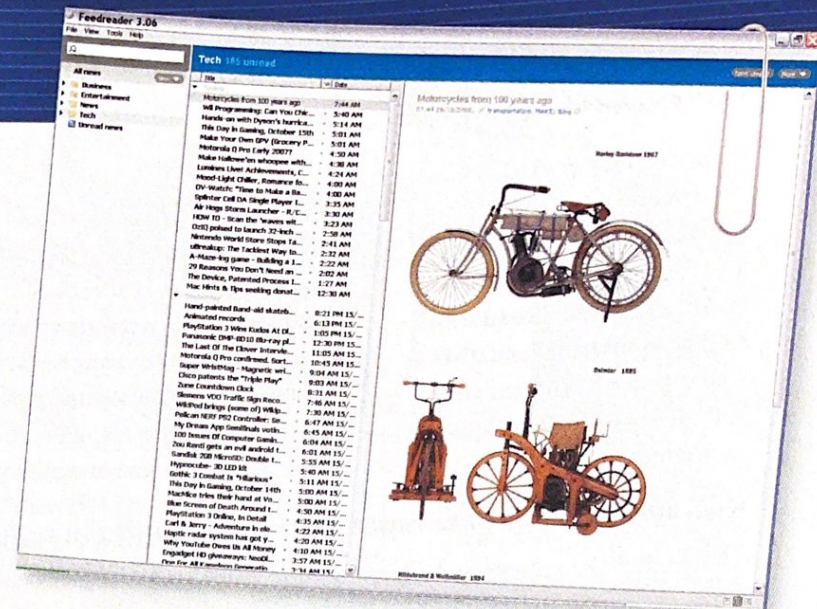
To utilise an RSS feed, you will need specialised 'RSS reader' software (also sometimes known as an 'aggregator'). You add RSS feed links to the software (a process known, sensibly enough, as 'subscribing'), and the software then automatically keeps track of updates as they occur.

There are literally hundreds of RSS reader software packages on the market. These cover a wide variety of operating systems, and the vast majority can be downloaded for free. (Given this level of competition, there's no point in paying for an RSS reader package.)

However, the market for individual readers may well disappear eventually. Microsoft is building support for RSS into the next version of Internet Explorer, and Firefox already includes RSS support. There are also a number of Web-based RSS readers, discussed in more detail in our beginner's tip 'The Web version' on page 46. Despite this, standalone RSS readers remain popular.

Setting up an RSS reader

First up, we'll explain how to access RSS feeds using one of the most popular RSS readers for Windows machines, Feedreader. (A similar process applies to most other readers.)



Feedreader is one of the most popular RSS readers available for Windows machines.

1. Download the software by going to www.feedreader.com, clicking on the 'Download Feedreader' link and then following the instructions. Download the file to any convenient location (such as your My Documents folder).
2. Run the FeedReader306Setup.exe file, which you've downloaded to install the application. (If you downloaded it to My Documents, simply launch My Documents from the Start menu and double-click on the file.)
3. During the installation process, you can simply follow the defaults and click 'Next' as appropriate to install the package.
4. Once installation is complete, select English as your operating language (unless you are installing the software for a non-English speaking friend or relative).

5. By default, Feedreader includes a large number of default feed links already built-in and sorted into categories. While these contain many useful entries, they do display something of a US bias.

If certain categories don't appeal to you, then deselect them at this stage of the

Expert Tip

What's in a name?

Confusingly, RSS is variously taken to stand for 'Really Simple Syndication', 'Rich Site Summary' or 'RDF Site Summary'. In simple terms, each of these refers to a slightly different implementation of the same basic concept. In practice, most people simply use the initials, and most RSS readers can handle all the formats without you needing to worry about the details.

installation process. (You can always edit any remaining entries later.)

6. Once this has been done and you click OK, Feedreader will begin populating lists (this can take a while if you've left all the default options switched on).
7. Once Feedreader is running, you can simply click on a category in the selection pane on the left of the screen, and then click on individual articles. A brief summary of the article will then appear; click on the headline to read the full text. (All this happens within Feedreader — you don't need to have your browser running.)
8. To edit the existing list of feeds, select 'Manage feed' from the File menu. To remove a feed, click on its name then click the 'Delete feed' button.

Expert Tip

Video star

Video sharing sites such as YouTube (www.youtube.com) include code you can use to automatically embed a video in your own blog posts. On YouTube, simply look for the section labelled 'Embed' next to the video. Select the code (don't worry about what it does), copy it and then paste it into your new posting to add one-click video viewing to your blog entry.

Useful Web sites

- For a useful list of sites that offer RSS feeds, sorted into categories, see www.newsonfeeds.com.
- For a handy directory of RSS reader software, see www.newsonfeeds.com/faq/aggregators.
- For an exhaustive history of the RSS concept, check out Wikipedia's entry at <http://tinyurl.com/6jfu9>.
- To search blogs and find material that interests you, see www.technorati.com and www.feedster.com.

9. To add a new feed, select New —> Feed from the file menu (or press the F3 key for a handy shortcut). Paste in the address of your required feed. On most sites, you can access the appropriate address simply by right-clicking on any provided RSS feed link and selecting 'Copy shortcut'.
10. You'll also notice that Feedreader provides pop-ups when it detects new articles. If this irritates you, it can be switched off. To do this, select Tools —> Options, and under 'Notifications' select 'Do not display notifications'.

Joining the blogosphere

Blogs are increasingly growing in popularity and volume. According to Forrester Research, 10% of Internet users read a blog at least once a week. Blog indexing site Technorati tracks more than 57 million blogs, and the number is growing every week.

Why do people go to the

time and effort to create their own blogs? For many, blogging provides an easy means of updating family and friends on their latest activities. Other people enjoy sharing their expertise on their interests, whether that topic is train spotting, local politics or just interesting stuff that they've found online.

Individual articles on a blog are often referred to in the blogging community as 'posts'. Most blogs also allow readers to offer their own comments on individual posts, creating a lively social forum. (Unfortunately, this can also make them a target for spam, resulting in most blogging software systems having anti-spam systems installed in an attempt to minimise the problem.)

Even if you have no interest in creating your own blog, blogs from people who have similar interests can make for great reading. The best way to locate such blogs is through specialised blog search sites like Technorati (www.technorati.com) and

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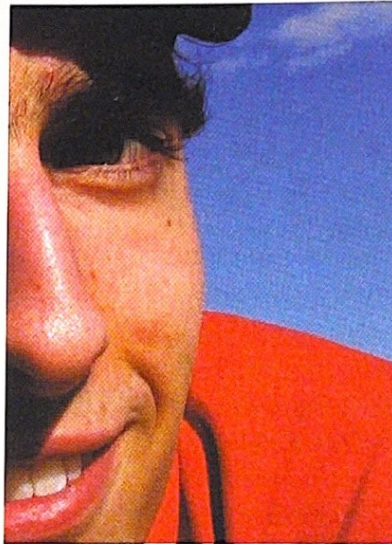
My words

We've been in Italy for three weeks and I'm still blown away by the incredible art and architecture - amazing sculpture and paintings. There's been no shortage of attention paid to the other fine things in life - great food, outstanding wine and coffee that'll cure even the worst hangover! Oh, and there was a certain someone I met on the train to Florence ... check out my photos for more on my rail activities :) Dave, Em and I have been hitting the local bars - not sure about the new trend of high-waisted pants, but hey, when in Rome ... will post more pictures and ramblings soon, cya later x.

My Italy pics



My profile



My music

- Gnarl's Barkley - seriously cool
- Scissor Sisters - gets me going
- Nelly Furtado - she's got sass
- The Killers - all attitude

My friends



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FEATURE :: BLOGGING & RSS FEEDS

Feedster (www.feedster.com)

— simply type in a search term (such as 'knitting' or 'Tasmania hiking') and see what comes up.

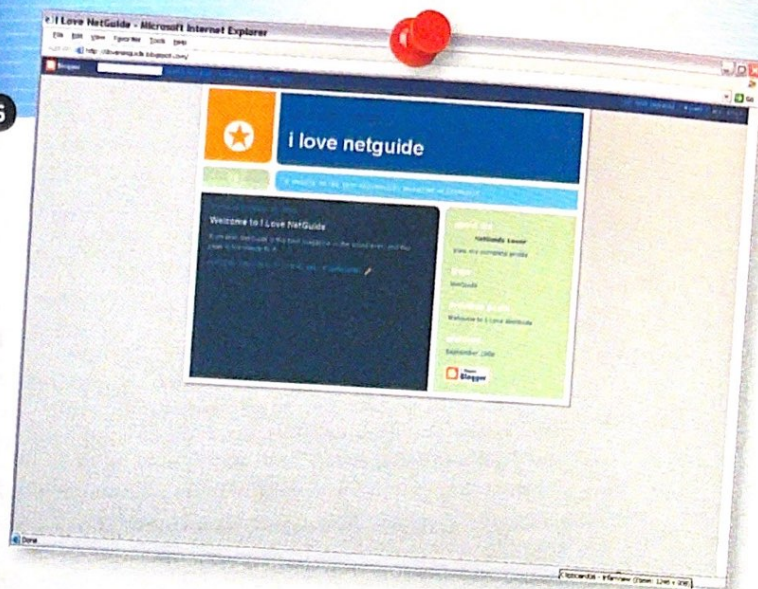
If you do find a blog that you enjoy, then take advantage of RSS to keep up with its posts. While many bloggers try and post regularly, few have an update cycle as regular as that of a commercial media Web site. However, most popular blogging packages offer an automatic RSS feed, making it easy to stay up-to-date without needing to check every day if anything's happened.

Build your own blog

If you feel inspired to create your own blog, then you don't need elaborate equipment — indeed, for a basic blog you need nothing more than a PC with an Internet connection and a browser. (If you want to include photos or video, you'll also need suitable tools for editing that material.)

We'll explain here how to create a basic blog using the Blogger service run by Google. (A similar process applies on other sites, though the details will differ.) Before you begin, you need to work out a name for your blog (avoid using anything based on your own name in order to protect your privacy).

1. Open the Blogger site at



www.blogger.com, and click on the 'Create your blog now'.

2. The first screen will ask you for a username and password, and an email address (used to send confirmation details). The username will be displayed on every entry, so again you may not wish to use your own actual name. Fill in the details and click on Continue.
3. The next screen will ask for a name for your blog and a suggested address

Creating your own blog is a breeze using a site like Blogger.

(which will usually be in the form blogname.blogspot.com). In our example, we've created a blog called I Love NetGuide, with the address ilovenetguide.blogspot.com. The site will let you know if you pick a name someone else is already using. You also need to enter the word shown in the graphic onscreen (a

Beginner Tip

Don't share too much

In the initial rush of blogging enthusiasm, you can often be tempted to reveal lots of personal details. However, bear in mind that more or less anyone can read your blog, so a little discretion is advisable. In particular, don't give away your full name and address, and think carefully about revealing details about other family members and friends, who may not share your enthusiasm for public disclosure. As a security precaution, don't use a password on your blog which is the same as the one you use for other services (like email or online banking).

What's your story? Create a space today.

security measure to prevent spammers creating fake blogs). Once that's done, click on Continue.

4. The next stage is to choose a template, which dictates the basic layout of your blog (such as the colours used, the number and width of columns on the screen, the fonts used and so on). There are several options available, so choose any one that appeals — you can always change it later if you get bored. When you've chosen, click on Continue.
5. Click on the 'Create your blog now' button and your blog will be created. Click on the 'Start posting' and you'll be able to write your first entry.

Expert Tip

Do it yourself

Free blog sites are a convenient and useful way to get started, but they tend to restrict the degree to which you can customise your blog's appearance and add extras. If you become an enthusiastic blogger, then it can be worthwhile setting up your own dedicated domain name and installing software yourself. One of the most widely used packages for these purposes is WordPress (www.wordpress.org), which is secure, flexible and already installed by many hosting sites.

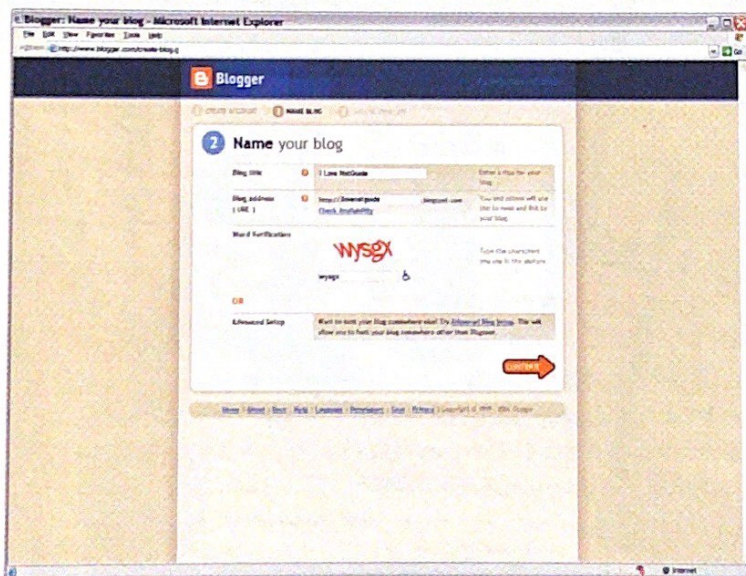
Write a quick introductory comment, and your blog will be ready to go.

6. Customising your blog is something of a trial-and-error process — test out different options in the 'dashboard' and 'settings' options to see the results.

Good blogging practice

Many people enjoy running their own blog for the sheer pleasure of writing, and aren't overly concerned with whether it attracts a large audience or not. However, if you do want your blog to appeal to the largest possible audience, consider the following strategies.

- Write posts regularly. Few readers will persist with a blog that only adds information every few weeks.
- Where possible, write your posts in a word processor and paste them into your Web browser, rather than writing them directly online. This may seem less spontaneous, but the built-in spelling and grammar checkers will help you avoid many errors.
- Encourage interaction and reply to other readers' comments. [NetGuide](http://www.netguide.com)



When you name your blog, avoid using anything based on your own name or other personal details for privacy reasons.

spaces.live.com



Windows Live Spaces

The D-Link® 1 2 3 of how to set-up your wireless network

It's always stressful being away from home -- but using D-Link's DCS-2120 Wireless Internet Camera and your 3G mobile phone can help you regain a sense of security.

GET A LIVE SECURITY FEED TO YOUR MOBILE PHONE

As Christmas time approaches and many of us start planning our holidays, there's always a nagging worry about what will happen while we're away. There's nothing so guaranteed to ruin that sense of festive cheer as finding that the house has been burgled. One easy way to keep track of what's happening at home is to use a camera such as the D-Link DCS-2120 Wireless Internet Camera. The live feed from the camera can be transmitted direct to a 3G

mobile phone, enabling you to check on your property at any hour of the day or night.

Wireless cameras can be useful in other contexts as well, such as checking on whether the kids are asleep upstairs, or even just seeing who is at the front door before you open it. Once the preserve purely of large businesses, such cameras are now affordable enough for any concerned homeowner.

I What you need

The DCS-2120 package contains everything you need to set up immediate surveillance, including the camera itself, an antenna for wireless Internet access, a cable for direct connection to the network, and all the required driver software.

How you choose to access the camera will depend upon your chosen applications and the existing networking equipment you have in your home. If you want to monitor a specific indoor location, then you can connect the camera directly to your PC using the supplied cable. If you want to monitor an outside location such as your front door, then using a wireless networking connection will be more appropriate. See NetGuide October 2007 for information on how to easily set up a home wireless network using D-Link's Wireless Starter Kits.



DCS-2120
Wireless Internet



Once the camera is installed, you also have a variety of monitoring options. As well as seeing the camera's output directly from your PC, you can use the provided surveillance software to automatically store footage or images whenever motion is detected. The feed from your camera can be accessed live via a Web browser, or via a 3G phone for immediate reassurance.

2 Set up and go!

Like D-Link's other wireless products, the DCS-2120 is straightforward to install. To initially configure the camera, simply connect it to your PC using the supplied Ethernet cable and then run the supplied Installation Wizard. (Following the initial camera configuration, you can easily switch to using a wireless network connection instead.) During this process, you can also set a password for the camera to ensure that only you have access to further configuration changes. If you want to monitor multiple locations, the supplied IP surveillance software can handle up to 16 separate cameras.

3 Where to buy

You can purchase D-Link's DCS-2120 Wireless Internet Camera from major retailers including Clive Anthonys, Dick Smith, Domayne, Harris Technology, Harvey Norman, Leading Edge Computers, Myer, Officeworks, Tandy and WOW Sight and Sound. For online retailers, check the listing under 'Where to buy' at www.dlink.com.au

Choosing a 3G phone

With its higher data speeds, better voice quality and video-sharing ability, 3G has quickly proved competitive to older GSM networks, and is expected to become the predominant means of mobile access over the next few years, largely replacing existing networks.

If you're looking to upgrade to 3G, there are a wide variety of plans on offer. If you don't want to spend a fortune on a new phone, you can easily subsidise the cost of a new handset by signing up to a contract. Web sites such as PhoneChoice (www.phonechoice.com.au) can help you compare the many 3G plans available and choose the one that's best for you.



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Photographing kids and animals

HELEN BRADLEY explains some of the best techniques for capturing compelling photos of kids and animals.

The old Hollywood adage that warns actors against working with animals and kids is one that could just as easily apply to budding photographers. Small kids and animals move fast — sometimes incredibly fast — and it's hard to stop long enough to get a good shot. Instead, you get a blurry or soft photo when you want a

nice sharp one. Worse still, kids are told so often to smile for the camera that they do it as soon as you put a camera in front of their faces and all you get is images of kids with cheesy smiles and no glimpse of their real personality.

Capturing good photographs of kids and animals takes practice and patience. The first step is generally to get down to

their level — most kids are shorter than you are, so if you stand to take the shot, you'll capture the top of their head, not their face, on photo. Bend your knees and squat down to get a good front or side-on angle.

If the kids are running around, track them with your camera. Follow the movement of the child with the camera and capture the

Tip

To capture a photo of a kid on a bike, have the child ride towards you. It's easier for the camera to focus as the movement comes towards it than it is to focus and capture movement going past you.

photo as you move. The result will be a pleasantly blurred background and a sharper image of the moving child.

Giving a child a favourite toy to play with works well when you're looking for a candid shot. The child will generally be so captivated by the toy that they will forget you are standing there and you can capture a few shots before they start moving again.

When you're photographing inside, look for good light so you don't have to use a flash. Sometimes the light will come from a window or even a skylight. Of course, if you don't have sufficient light, use the flash — taking a longer exposure generally won't be



Often photos of children look great converted to black and white or sepia tones.

an option, because long exposures mean more chance that the child will move in the meantime.

Outside, avoid shooting in the middle of the day and use the early morning and late afternoon light where possible. The warmer colours of this light are more flattering to children's skin tones, which can be uneven and even a little blotchy.

On dull days and indoors, if your camera allows you to choose ISO film equivalencies, use 400 or even 800 speed 'film' to capture more light in less time. Smaller ISO values of 100 and 200 require longer exposures and blurring will be an issue, although these are a good choice on bright days.

Other ways to entertain older children as you take their photo involve getting them to tell you a story — they'll often get so involved in the story that they'll forget you're there.



Not all photos have to have the kids looking at you as this candid shot shows.

Out of doors, other activities like swimming and using playground equipment are good ways to entertain and still capture great photos.

When you're photographing kids, don't hesitate to fill the frame with their faces. This not only lets you concentrate on their facial expressions, but it also ensures you get rid of unsightly background detail.



This close-up has a nicely blurred away background.

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The best shots you'll take will be those where you and the kids (or your pets) are relaxed, so be patient, take your time and make the day fun. Don't force the issue — if the kids absolutely won't do what you're asking of them, let it go and try again another day. Photo time should be enjoyable and if you make it fun, then you'll have more willing subjects over the years to come.

If your kids insist on pulling silly faces, do a trade and offer one silly face photo for a sensible one. Most kids will respond to this and everyone is happy! One side benefit is that every so often one of the silly photos turns out to be a winner.

Pet portraits

When shooting pets, having them on their own territory or somewhere they feel comfortable is a plus. For big dogs, you can have someone hold them on a leash and have someone else offer treats. If the dog is used to sitting for treats, you can often zoom in

Useful Web site

From the company that defined modern-day photography, Kodak, comes a series of great tips for all sorts of photography. Read more about tips and tricks for capturing great photos of the kids here at <http://tinyurl.com/ml2pt>.



Cats are great subjects when they're comfortable; capture them in the places they like to sit or sleep.



Have someone hold a large dog on a leash and someone else offer treats.

and get a great head shot in this situation.

Cats love to nap and you can capture wonderful photos if you wait for them to curl up in a sunny place. To focus up close, use the macro feature on your camera and get in very close. You're almost guaranteed to get a good photo if there's enough light, and the macro option will blur the background elements very nicely.

Avoid having to use the flash as most cat's eyes will shut in the time it takes to fire the flash and you'll get half-closed eyes as a result. Other places to capture good photos of a cat are favourite places for them to sit where they'll be relaxed and less likely to bolt. If your camera has an option for silent operation, use this to minimise the distraction of the camera's shutter noise.

Editing options

You will often find that portraits of kids look particularly good in black and white, but we recommend you don't actually shoot in black and white. Instead, shoot in colour so you have the colour images available, then later on in your graphics software, make the change to black and white. This way, you get the best of both worlds.

If you have a favourite shot of your child or your dog and if it's not in focus, apply a filter such as a sketch filter to it. You will often find the result is a very pleasing image and the filter will hide the softness in the image. However, before you apply the filter, make sure to adjust the photo so the colour and contrast are correct. **NetGuide**

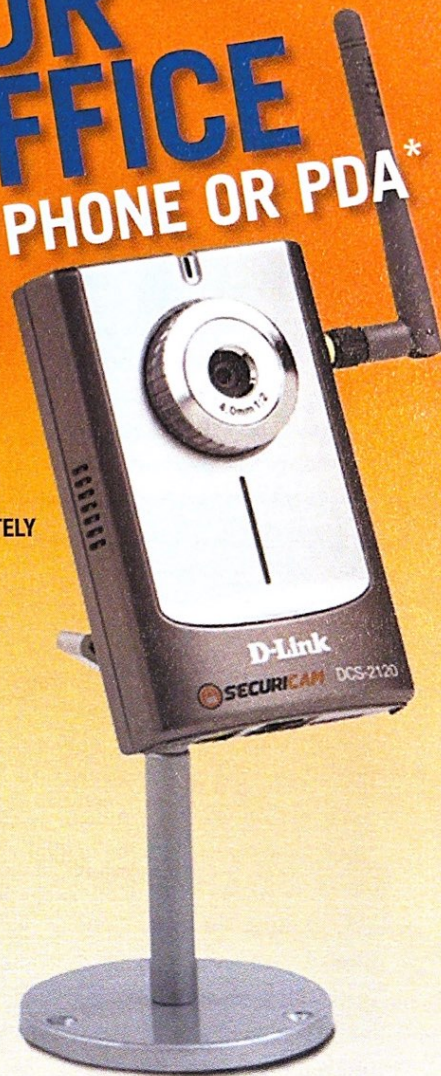
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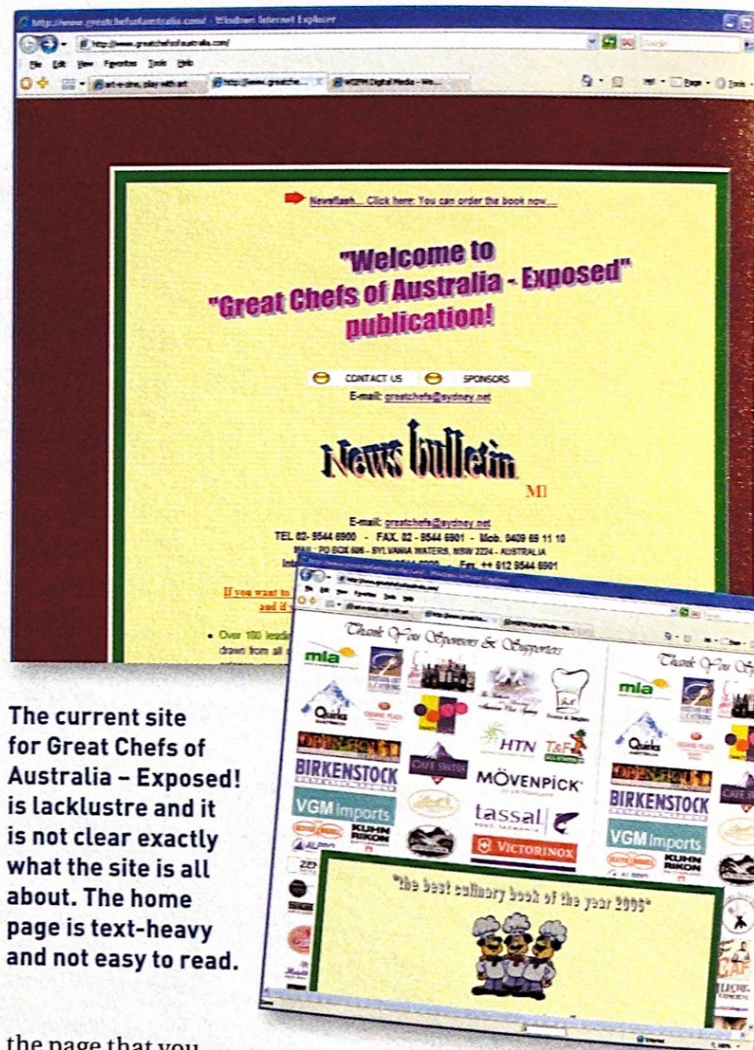
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Chefs' secrets

Designing a Web site isn't technically very difficult, but designing a good site is a whole different ball game, says **HELEN BRADLEY** and **MARILYN HUGHES**.

One problem we often encounter with business Web sites is that their designers don't appear to know what to focus on or who exactly they're talking to. It's all too easy to know so much about your own business that you design a site that assumes your visitors know what you do — they don't! However, before you start writing pages of text to tell them all about you, remember that it's also easy to overburden them with too much information that they don't want or need. Exactly where the balance is between too much of the wrong information and not enough of the right information is the subject of this month's makeover.

The site we were invited to makeover is called Great Chefs of Australia — Exposed! and you will find it here at www.greatchefsofaustralia.com. The site is the support site for a new publication of the same name, full of tips and information from Australia's leading chefs. Unfortunately, you won't know this when you first land on the site, because the cover of the book is displayed so far down



The current site for Great Chefs of Australia — Exposed! is lacklustre and it is not clear exactly what the site is all about. The home page is text-heavy and not easy to read.

the page that you have to scroll to see it. Since the site is all about the book, we'd like to see it be given more emphasis. Instead of a view of the book, you're treated to a WordArt created site title and some other distracting

elements, all of which would be better placed somewhere else on the page or the site.

However, the single biggest problem with this site is that it's very difficult to know what

it is all about and what you, as a visitor, can gain from it. It's more important that visitors find what they want on the site, rather than what the designer wants to say about the business. When visitors come to a site like this, they want to know straight up what you're selling and how they can benefit from it.

In this case, the site owner is selling a book that should be of interest to just about anyone who loves cooking or eating out, or simply reading about food. It's just a pity you won't know this until you sift through quite a lot of the text on the page. Unfortunately, given that there is so much text, it's unlikely that most visitors will bother reading all the way. In short, this site needs to refocus on its audience and it needs to deliver its information in smaller, more succinct and reader-focused pieces.

Some of the other issues with this site are that underlined text



Our madeover home page and sponsors page are tightly designed and professional looking. They make it much clearer what the site is about.



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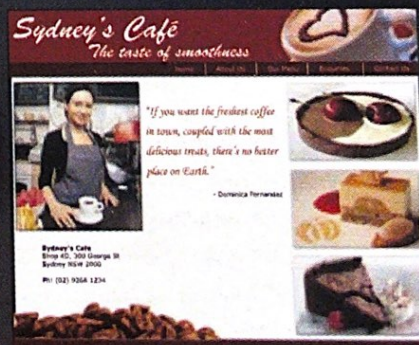
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has been used in circumstances where it doesn't constitute a link. This is very confusing to Web visitors and should always be avoided — underlining should only ever be used for hyperlinked text, as that's what visitors have come to expect. The site has no clear navigation structure, which makes it difficult to move around and, worse still, it's not really clear what there is on this site. You might assume the site is made up of a few pages, but finding them is quite difficult. In addition, information such as the address and phone numbers, which would generally be expected to be at the foot of the page, are slap bang in the middle of it, taking up valuable room and attention that they really don't deserve to have. In our makeover, we'll put that information on a page of its own.

For this site, we created not only a makeover, but we also edited down the content on the pages we worked on to make them more accessible. The pages we designed were the site's home page, which contains most of the information about the book, and the Sponsors page.

We designed a totally new look for the site, which constrains the home page so it fits in the browser window and doesn't require scrolling to view it. The result is that most of the extraneous text

It's more important that visitors find what they want on the site, rather than what the designer wants to say about the business.

has been removed from the home page, allowing us to focus on the book and some teaser text to encourage the visitor to read further.

The newly designed site has strong visual 'cooking' cues. It displays a chef's hat, the book's cover and some faux napkins under the page text. The navigation system, which didn't exist on the original site, has been placed in a clear position on the page where it's easy to see. This makes it easy to determine what the site contains and to access all the information about the chefs, sponsors and reviews.

The other page we reworked was the Sponsors page. The challenge here was to get a lot of information into a very small space. The current Sponsors page has a large table displaying information about all the sponsors including images — some are nice logos and some appear to be ads and even scanned brochures. In our makeover, we've taken the names of all the sponsors and arranged them into a simple paragraph of text each name separated from the next by a tilde (~) character. As the visitor holds their mouse over

the text, the company's logo appears at the top of the page and, if they click the link, the company's Web site opens in a new browser window. The result is that all the sponsors' names are visible in the browser window as soon as the page loads. All their logos are visible (by holding your mouse over their name) and their sites are only one click away. It's a model that is widely used in social bookmarking sites and other sites that use tags, and it's a style that is increasingly familiar to the rest of the Web community.

Overall, the makeover site is much more professional and provides a worthy companion site to the book. NetGuide

Web makeover

If you'd like to nominate your site for a makeover, email netguide@acp.com.au with your details.



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Victorian online records

The **SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIAN GENEALOGISTS** takes you through the online offerings of the Public Record Office of Victoria.

The Public Record Office of Victoria (PROV) is making more of its major record sets available online (www.prov.vic.gov.au), and that is good news for family historians.

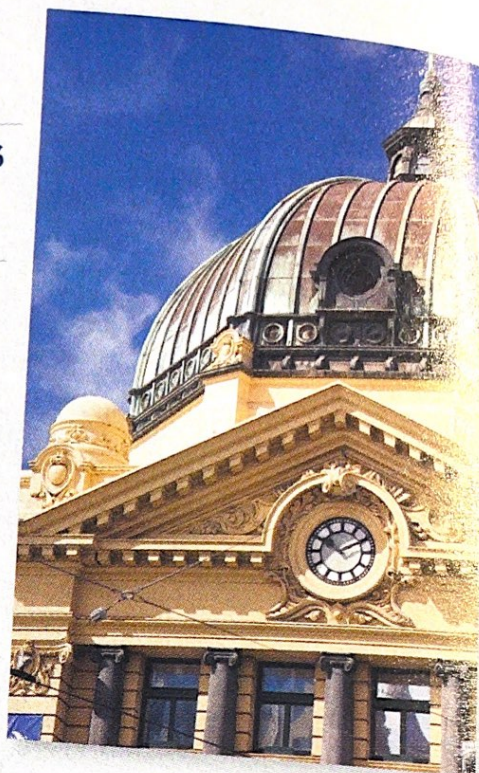
It now has indexes to unassisted (free) passengers arriving in that colony from British, Foreign and New Zealand ports from 1852 to 1923 — a wide time period that covers those boom years when Victoria attracted so many people because of the lure of gold. 'Foreign' in this context meant any port of departure outside of the British Empire, so shipping from Germany and the US is included.

A search of the index can be made by name, ship, or date of arrival. The information shown provides name, age (if given), the month and year of arrival and the name of the ship. There is then reference to the microfiche and page number of the original record held by the Public Record Office of Victoria in its searchroom. Many of the

actual shipping lists are also now being made available on microfiche, so it can be worthwhile checking with your local genealogical society and/or library to see if you can access these in your local area if you find an index entry of interest online. Assisted British immigrant arrivals from 1839 to 1871 complete the current stable of inwards shipping available on this site.

Indexes to Outward Passengers 1852 to 1861 are also available online, and these provide similar information to those for inward passengers, as well as showing where a passenger was travelling to — this could provide a valuable lead if you've 'lost' someone around this time.

PROV is also committed to providing digitised images of many of its major record sets online for free, and the list of those available is rapidly growing. An example is the




Divorce Cause Books, which provide the names of both the petitioner and respondent (and co-respondent if there was one) to all divorces in Victoria from 1861 to 1924. The index is provided as a PDF of the original record, so you'll need Adobe Reader to view it. Some files are quite large and can take a little while to download if you have a slow Internet connection, but this may be only a minor inconvenience when you see the quality of the images — you really do feel like you are turning the pages of the original nineteenth century ledger.

Digitised records include Department of Education correspondence files, which are well used by local historians researching specific schools and areas, and an impressive list of Asylum records covering both suburban Melbourne and places like Beechworth, Ballarat and Bendigo. Indexes to insolvency records (1848 to 1875) and a Central Register of Male (1868 to 1947) and Female Prisoners (1857 to 1948) are also sure to be useful to family historians.

One of the most ambitious and exciting digitisation projects being undertaken by the PROV is the digitisation of Victorian probate records. The outcome of this project is that researchers will be able to view copies of old wills for free online — a wonderful resource. Many probate records are already indexed on this site, and although you cannot download images of more recent wills for viewing, you can order them in for consultation at the Public Record Office searchroom in Melbourne. So this is a good site to visit if you are likely to have the opportunity to personally undertake some research in Melbourne in the near future, and also one to keep revisiting as the digitisation of the historical wills gathers momentum.

The site is relatively easy to use, but it does rather keep its most useful features hidden.

From the home page of www.prov.vic.gov.au, you need to use the link in the grey box on the left-hand side of the screen 'Access the Collection' and then

follow the hyperlink to 'digitised records and online indexes'. You'll then get to the list of what is available either in index or digitised format. 

Letter of the month

After our mother's death, my sisters and I found a bundle of old black-and-white photo negatives. Apart from the problem of trying to find someone to make prints from them, I am afraid that the cost of prints would more than likely be beyond what we could afford. Is there any software available which would transfer these negatives into photos onto a computer. I have a scanner if it is needed.

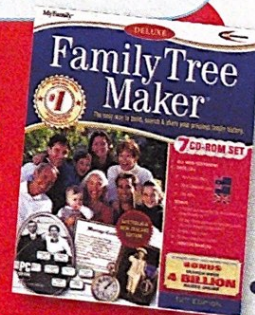
My sisters and I are all in our seventies and are fairly new chums with computers — however, we are perpetual students — and loving it!!

I have subscribed to your magazine for almost three years and find it very helpful and interesting, especially the HelpDesk section and, also the Genealogy section, as the three of us are all into researching our family tree. **SHIRLEY LUNDIE**

Yes, it is certainly possible to transfer old negatives into digital images on a computer, and many scanners today will do that for you. First, check the scanner you already have and see if it has this capability. If so, it should have come with a special carriage unit to hold the negatives in place while being scanned. Otherwise, you'll need to purchase a new scanner, but they are coming down in price all the time and learning how to do this yourself will be far cheaper than paying to get them done for you. And in the process you can identify the people in them so future generations know who they are looking at!

New genealogy competition

From this month on, we'd like you to let us know your favourite genealogy Web site so we can share it with our readers. The winner will receive a copy of the Family Tree Maker Deluxe genealogy software, valued at \$99.95, thanks to software distributor Mindscape (www.mindscape.net.au). Email genealogy@netguide.com.au today with your nomination for your chance to win.





HelpDesk

Readers' technical questions answered.

Changing Media Player

Q I upgraded my Media Player 9 to version 11 (beta). I now want to change to Media Player 10. How do I go about it?

A This link will take you to a procedure to roll back to a previous version: <http://tinyurl.com/ovndr>. You can then get Media Player 10 from <http://tinyurl.com/l3e8n>.

Checking email

Q Can you advise me if there is any way that I can get my computer to tell me if I have any messages on startup rather than having to go into Outlook Express to find out?

A Outlook Express (OE) has to be running in order to check the email server for new messages. You could put OE into your 'startup' folder so that it starts automatically when you start up your computer. OE will check for incoming mail when it starts and can be configured to re-check regularly. I set my Outlook to check every 15 minutes. To change that, go to Tools —> Options —> General tab and look for 'Check my email every...'. Check that box and enter the number of minutes between checks.

Windows Me uninstall

Q I recently loaded Windows 2000 Professional on my Me machine. Instead of overwriting Me, it installed in parallel, with BOOT.INI enabling a choice of Me or 2000. How do I remove Me?

A It sounds like the Windows 2000 Professional's install procedure has created a separate partition for it using the spare space on your disk.

When you boot the 2000 Professional CD, it brings up a list of existing partitions on your disk and asks you which partition you want to install it into. I'd suggest that the cleanest way to trash Me would be to re-boot the 2000 Professional install CD and when it comes up with the screen that shows you the existing partitions, follow the instructions to delete all the existing partitions on your disk and create a new partition or partitions, format the C: partition using NTFS and install 2000 Professional from scratch. All data on your disk will be deleted, so make sure you back up any documents, email and bookmarks you may have stored on your machine first (see our feature on backing up in the January 2006 issue of *NetGuide*).

Screen settings

Q I have just bought a widescreen monitor, but some Web pages only display half of the screen. How can I get all sites to occupy the available screen space?

A Some sites position page content to make the best use of your available display area, but most sites assume you are running your monitor at a modest resolution like 800 by 600 or 1,024 by 768. I suspect your widescreen is set to a high resolution like 1,680 by 1,024. You can increase the font size and make those sites fill more of the screen by reducing your display resolution, or you could leave it as it is and increase the displayed font size. Presuming you are using Windows XP, here's how it's done.

1. Enter the Display Properties dialog by either right-clicking on an empty part of the desktop and selecting Properties, or selecting Display from the Control Panel. Now click on the Settings tab.
2. You can adjust the screen resolution using the slider in the bottom left of the Settings tab, or to change the font size, click Advanced and increase

the DPI setting to either Large or a custom value.

Windows will need to install fonts and re-start, so have your installation CD handy in case it's needed.

Click on Apply, then follow the prompts to insert the CD and to re-start if prompted.

DVD writer options

Q I would like to know if there are any disadvantages to getting an external writer rather than an internal one, other than the price. I would have to pay between \$30 and \$50 to get someone to do the installation, so the cost would probably even out. All I want it for is to back up my data and possibly some photos. Any advice on what would be best?

A External drives are handy if you have several computers and want to move the drive between them. Sometimes the speed of the drive can be affected by the power of

the machine — this is most noticeable when writing a DVD. On a Pentium II or Celeron, it can take several hours to write a DVD. Faster, more recent machines manage the job in 15 minutes or so. External drives usually connect to your PC via a USB port, but there are other options. USB is generally reliable and stable. If your computer has USB 2.0, and is a Pentium III or higher, the external drive should be a fine solution for you. If your USB ports are 1.0 or 1.1 speed, the

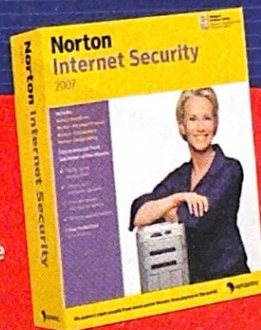
external drive will be very slow, though probably acceptable given the small amount of data that you will be writing.

Networking solution

Q I have a PC with a broadband connection through BigPond. I also have a laptop that I would like to connect to the same broadband connection, but run in another room. Telstra told me that I need to get a wireless broadband connection for the laptop, but I have heard that there is a way of

WIN

Each month, the reader we deem to have submitted the most topical question to HelpDesk will win a copy of Norton Internet Security 2007 (www.symantec.com), valued at \$99.95. This powerful security suite includes anti-virus, anti-spyware and phishing protection, and an enhanced firewall. So, send in your computer-related problem to helpdesk@netguide.com.au to be in the running. Remember, if you are experiencing a problem, chances are there are others out there with the same dilemma — no question is too trivial!



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connecting a laptop wirelessly to a current PC with a broadband connection. Can you please offer some advice as to what I would need? Do the laptop and PC have to be networked?

A Yes, you will need to network the two machines, and then run 'Internet connection sharing' on the machine that has the broadband connection. Networking the machines will involve installing and configuring wireless network cards in both machines (unless your laptop is a fairly new model, in which case it will probably already have wireless built in). Our KnowHow article in the June 2006 issue of the magazine provides a step-by-step guide to setting up a wireless network in your home.

HTML in email

Q Each time I send or receive an email in Outlook Express, it replicates itself as an attachment. This is particularly annoying, as

it tends to mask a genuine inbound attachment. It has only recently started doing this and I wonder if I might have inadvertently changed a setting. I am operating Windows XP Home with SP2 and all updates.

A You may have Outlook Express set to use HTML. If you don't want to use HTML for email, then go to Tools → Options → Send and select 'Mail sending format' as Plain Text. Alternatively, try Tools → Options → Read, and tick the 'Read all messages in plain text' box.

Blu-ray discs

Q I have a CD/DVD writer and I want to use Blu-ray discs. Do I have to use a special disc drive or can I just use Blu-ray discs in my CD/DVD drive?

A You'll need a Blu-ray-capable drive to read and write Blu-ray discs (BD). Check with your drive manufacturer to find out whether your drive supports Blu-ray, but it's highly

unlikely, as the first Blu-ray-capable burners are only just starting to trickle onto the market now. The reason you can't write to Blu-ray discs with a conventional CD/DVD burner is because the discs use a different coating and require a different laser to burn data to them — the DVD uses a red laser; the Blu-ray disc uses a blue laser. Like any new technology, Blu-ray burners and discs are and will remain horrendously expensive until mass manufacture and distribution kicks in. See www.blu-ray.com for more info.

WIN 98 firewall

Q Where can I find a free firewall program that runs in Windows 98? I tried installing ZoneAlarm 6.5.722 under Windows 98 and I had a big problem. ZoneAlarm says that since Microsoft stopped support for Windows 98, ZoneAlarm can no longer be installed on a Windows 98 PC.

NETGUIDE DECEMBER 2006 SUBSCRIPTION PROMOTION TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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A BlackIce, Kerio and Lavasoft are three free firewalls that will do the trick. Check out www.majorgeeks.com/downloads34.html to download any of the three.

Windows updates

Q Over the past few months, I have been using up my 400M download allocation each month without downloading much information. I don't download music or video and mainly use the Internet for general surfing and email collection. I do get a few larger emails every now and then, but not enough to use up 400M. My computer is set to automatically update Windows with any updates that are available. Could this be the reason for using up so many megabytes, or could it be something else? I have now changed the settings to not automatically download any Windows updates, but my computer keeps bringing up a balloon advising that my

computer might be at risk, as the automatic update function is turned off. How can I stop this happening?

A You could set your automatic updates to 'Notify me, but don't download or install updates'. You should then only get a pop-up when a new update is available, rather than every half an hour or so, as you do if the updates are turned off. You might also like to run an up-to-date spyware and virus checking package — some nastyware will use your bandwidth without your knowledge.

Getting fixes

Q I updated my Norton Antivirus software and ever since it's been saying I have an item that needs urgent attention. I click 'fix now', but it doesn't fix the problem. Is my computer being properly protected? What should I do?

A Follow these steps on the Symantec Web site at

<http://tinyurl.com/2g6pu>. If that doesn't work, try the advice at <http://tinyurl.com/fby39>.

Anti-spyware programs

Q I have an old computer running Windows Me. What is the best free software to download to remove spyware and adware. I have McAfee Internet Security Suite, but I believe it's not picking up all my spyware and adware. What would you recommend?

A Go to the NetGuide Web site (www.netguide.com.au/v2/software/esstools.php) where you'll find a range of free software for your computer. When it comes to anti-spyware and anti-adware software, it's a good idea to use multiple programs, as each one tends to pick up different problems. This allows you to cover more of your bases. These anti-spyware and anti-adware programs will run happily alongside your McAfee Security Suite. 

- responsible for any additional access fees and call costs not provided as part of the prize. Prize is subject to gotalk standard Terms and Conditions.
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Full version tutorials

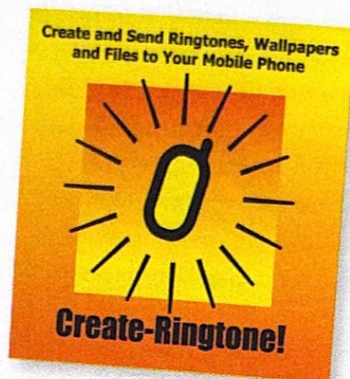
ANGELA BOOTH shows you how to get up and running with the full version software on the *NetGuide* Web site this month.

Create-Ringtone 3 (1.7M)

Create-Ringtone 3 is a useful utility to help you to get more out of your mobile phone. The program lets you create ringtones from audio files on your computer, it creates phone wallpaper from image files, and it can also send files to your mobile. To use Create-Ringtone 3, your mobile must have a network connection to upload files to your phone. The simplest way is via a wired connection with USB. Other options are possible, but this depends on your phone. You also need file transfer software — check your mobile's documentation to see what capabilities it has, and consult the FAQ section of the Create-Ringtone 3 Web site (www.create-ringtone.com).

To create your own ringtone from an audio file on your computer, choose an audio file. You can choose an MP3 or WAV file, a track from a CD, or you can record an audio message using a microphone and recording software.

When you've chosen your audio file, open Create-Ringtone 3 and click Select Audio File From My Computer



from under the Ringtone menu. (If you're using an audio track from a CD, click Get Audio Track From CD-ROM.)

A Windows Explorer window will open. Navigate to the file, select it, then press the Open button. An Edit window will open. Click and drag in the Edit window to choose the part of the file that you want to use as the ringtone. Click Zoom In on the View menu to make choosing easier. You can click and drag again at any time to choose a different section. Press Preview Ringtone to preview your selection. When you've chosen,

click Save My Ringtone under the File menu. Type a name for the file and choose the format from the Save As Type drop-down list. Click Save.

Computer Security Tool 4 (4.8M)

As its name suggests, the Computer Security Tool helps you to identify security weaknesses on your computer and implement recommended changes to your system. A Rollback option is available, so that if a change has unintended consequences, you can roll back your system to its previous state. There's also a comprehensive Help file, so if you're a computer novice, read this file before you let the program make changes.

When you start Computer Security Tool, you'll see two tabs at the top of the screen: Basic Mode, and Rollback/Undo. Click Basic Mode. You'll see your system information, including

How to get your software

Go to www.netguide.com.au/software to download this month's full version software. To access the new software, you'll need to enter the username and password that you'll find on page 6. The files have been compressed to minimise the download sizes and the file size is indicated for each program. The programs will be available to download for six months.

the operating system, its install date, and the computer's IP address. Above this information is a large Scan Now button.

Before you begin scanning your computer, create a Restore point if you're using Windows XP. Press Create Restore Point on the Options list on the left of the screen. Type a name for the restore point. Then click Create Restore Point.

Next, press the Scan Now button in the middle of the Computer Security Tool window. The program will scan your computer to identify possible security issues. When the scan is finished, you need to tell Computer Security Tool how your system is configured. This depends on your system — for example, if the program detects a network card, it will ask you whether you're connected to a network or not. Press the appropriate radio button. When you've finished making choices, click the Do Not Ask These Questions Again checkbox. Then press the Next button on the bottom right of the screen.

The next screen is the Fix

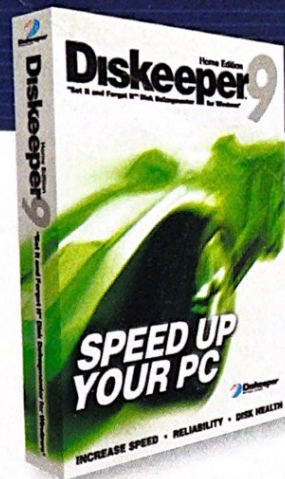
Security Issues screen. You'll see various buttons: Windows Lockdown Protection Tasks, Internet Virus & Spyware Protection, User Account Protection Tasks, and Hackers Protection Tasks. The number of problems found displays to the right of each button. To see what the problems are, click each button. Uncheck a checkbox if you don't want Computer Security Tool to perform a particular security task.

When you're ready, click the Fix Now button to have Computer Security Tool fix the problems.

Diskeeper 9.0 Home Edition (17.5M)


Diskeeper 9.0 Home Edition is a hard disk defragmenting program. Defragging your disks improves your system's performance, and gives you an early indication of possible disk problems on your system. When you've installed the program, open it, and you'll see the Performance tab, which shows you all the disks on your computer. Select a disk volume, and click the Analyze button on the top right of the screen.

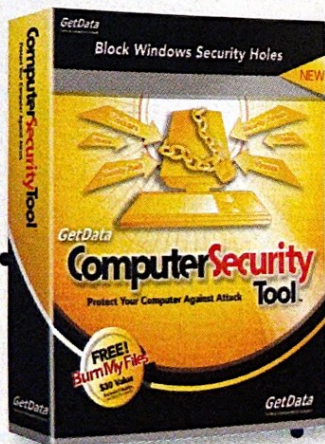
When the analysis is complete, you'll see a graphical representation of the performance losses you're incurring because of fragmentation — and the increased performance when each disk is defragmented. When you're ready to run the defragmentation, press the



Defragment button to the right of the Analyze button. You can run the defragging operation manually, or you can schedule defragmentation to run at specific dates and times.

If you want to set up a schedule, click the Set It And Forget It tab on the right of the screen — it's to the left of the Drive Map. Set It And Forget It lets you run the defragging utility in the background even when you're using your computer. You can set schedules for every disk on your system, or only for specific disks or volumes. For example, if you're using a disk as a backup disk, you don't need to defrag it as often as you do your working disks. Choose your disk, and then choose Options from the drop-down list.

If you're not sure how often you need to defrag your disks, let Diskeeper choose for you with its Smart Schedule feature. Choose Set It And Forget It on the Command Pane on the left of the screen, then choose Set Smart Schedule, or Set Smart Schedule After Hours. This lets Diskeeper analyse your disks, and adjust defragging schedules as needed. 



Time out

GAMES JUST FOR KIDS | GADGETS | PC FUN

PC games

Defcon

RRP \$US17.50 via download only

WEB <http://everybody-dies.com>

PROS Great multiplayer fun; genuinely atmospheric.

CONS Poor single player mode.

If you lived through the 1980s — and who didn't? — then you were faced with the sight of Boy George telling you that "war is stupid" — right at the same time that a very young Matthew Broderick saved us all from nuclear holocaust in the film classic *WarGames*. Defcon is, in essence, both Boy George's warning and even moreso *WarGames* on a computer screen. You take charge of one of the world's nuclear powers — divided on a continent-by-continent basis — as the in-game nuclear clock ticks down. There's no diplomacy, and no going back — once you reach Defcon 1, missiles can start firing. But this is no simple shooter. It's a strategy title with a surprising amount of depth and buckets of atmosphere, thanks to the wireframe graphics and foreboding music — not to mention the constant overlays, reminding you that a Soviet nuke has just killed 2.3 million people in one of your cities. Defcon's main weakness is in single player mode, as it's a game that simply must be played multiplayer to get the most out of it. Strategy junkies and, for that matter, world leaders who want a strategic eye to the horrors of nuclear war, should definitely check out Defcon.

NetGuide's
RATING ●●●●●



Reviews by Alex Kidman

NHL 2007

(Also available on PS2, Xbox, Xbox 360)

RRP \$79.95-\$119.95 (prices vary by format)

WEB www.ea.com

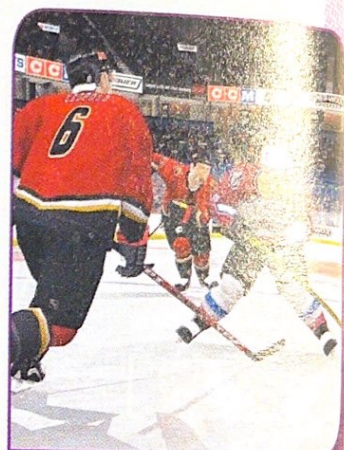
PROS Quick arcade-style fun; very easy to learn.

CONS Fighting mode is somewhat stupid; not much updated aside from rosters.

If there's a sport that Aussies are less likely to play than gridiron, it's ice hockey — must be something to do with the ambient temperature, not to mention the relative lack of ice rinks.

However, as a virtual spectacle, NHL 2007 comes highly recommended, simply because it's a fast and simple sport that works very well in digital form. It's helped by the rules of ice hockey that promote fast play, so much so that playing the game almost feels akin to an older-style arcade title, and you may be tempted to rack up a few 20c pieces on your monitor. On the minus side, the same update problems that plague Madden (reviewed on opposite page) are present here, so if you're a fan and don't care about the roster updates there's less impetus to upgrade. Additionally, we're yet to see an NHL game that presents anything approaching a realistic fight. In real life, hockey fights are exciting and brutal enough to be a spectacle in themselves. In NHL 2007, they might as well be an Atari 2600 game.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●●



GAMES
WAREHOUSE.COM.AU



HUGE
Range



NETGUIDE RATING



Very Good

Good

Fair

Don't Bother

Console games

Madden NFL 2007

(Available on PC, PS2, Xbox and Xbox 360)

RRP \$79.95-\$119.95 (prices vary by format)

WEB www.ea.com

PROS A great way to learn about the NFL; looks superb on the right system.

CONS They're still all wearing big wussy armour; not that different from last year's Madden. Here in Australia, we like 'proper' football. Proper as in the 'no armour, just charge at that bloke on the other team and hope the ref doesn't spot you putting the boot in' type football, whether your code of choice is league, AFL, union or soccer. Americans don't see it that way, and the above-average gamer spend in the US means that the Madden franchise — John Madden's the US equivalent of, effectively, Daryl Eastlake, by the



way — gets more money pushed into it than just about any other sports game, and it shows. On a good spec PC — or the Xbox 360 — this is a lush-looking game, and it's also a great way to actually learn how the NFL operates and how the game is played on both a strategy and 'biffo' level. At the same time, it's not that much of an improvement on last year's version, leaving aside the obvious roster updates. Like most US sports, there's a lot of stats and some interesting franchise action on offer here, so it's definitely a replayable title, albeit one that only the real aficionados should buy each and every year.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

Dead Rising

(Xbox 360)

RRP \$119.95

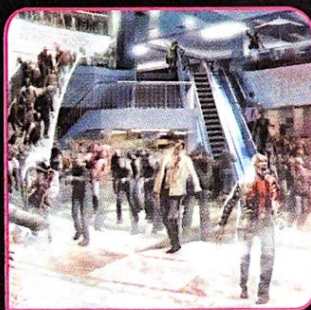
WEB <http://ww2.capcom.com/deadrising>

PROS Zombies . . . thousands of 'em; some truly inventive Zombie-killing methods.

CONS Annoying save system; looks awful on an SD TV.

Dead Rising is just like a video game version of George Romero's *Dawn Of The Dead* — so much so that it carries a disclaimer!

The game casts you in the role of Frank West, an investigative reporter cum photographer, who gets himself dropped onto the mall roof of



a town that the US military has summarily cut off from the rest of the world — because the whole town is infested with zombies and intermittent insane living people. It's up to Frank to uncover the truth within three days. Dead Rising's most impressive achievement is rendering thousands of zombies at once, and giving Frank almost entirely free reign as to how to deal with them. However, it has a very strange save and mission system that sees you effectively forced to either abandon your search if you fail certain missions, or just start again with your upgraded character stats each and every time. It's also worth noting that on a smaller standard definition screen, the in-game text boxes are totally unreadable, so if you're connecting your Xbox 360 to an SD screen, Dead Rising is sadly not for you.

NetGuide's RATING ●●●●○

www.gameswarehouse.com.au

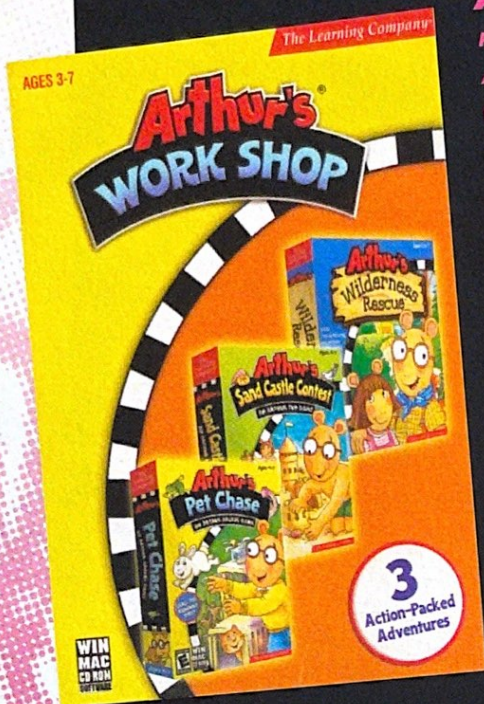
Great Prices!



Time out

GAMES JUST FOR KIDS GADGETS | PC FUN

Reviews by Gail Lipscombe



Arthur's Workshop

RRP \$29.95

AGES Four to seven years

WEB www.mindscape.net.au

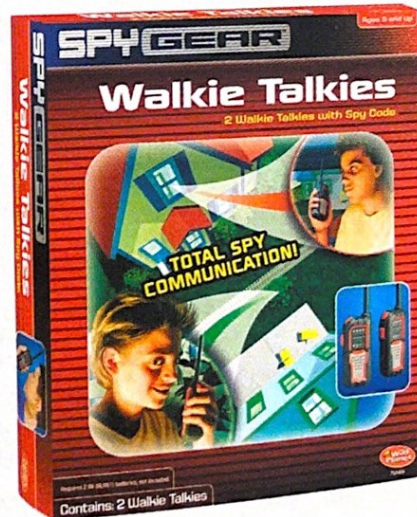
At just \$29.95, you sure get your money's worth out of this pack featuring that very appealing and cluey little mouse, Arthur. It consists of three separate titles: Arthur's Pet Rescue, Arthur's Sand Castle Contest and Arthur's Wilderness Rescue (the last two titles are also available individually via download from the Mindscape site for \$14.95). In Arthur's Pet Rescue, Arthur is pet sitting, but when the little critters get loose, you have to help Arthur round them up before their owners find out. In the Sand Castle Contest, you have to help Arthur design and build a fantastic sand castle, but it won't be as easy as you think. Finally, in Wilderness Rescue, you'll be faced with lots of challenges as you brave the wilds of Mount Rockslide on a class camping trip. The graphics are great in all three titles and the many activities on offer mean you'll never be bored.

WIN

1 of 16 SpyGear packs

Thanks to Funtastic (www.funtastic.com.au), 16 lucky kids will win a Spy Gear pack, consisting of a Spy Gear Alarm and a Spy Gear Walkie Talkie. Each pack is valued at \$29.95. So, get your entries in now for your chance to spend the school holidays in your own spy adventure. To enter, go to www.netguide.com.au/win, enter the username and password on page 6, and enter your details. Entries must be in by close of business December 12, 2006. For terms and conditions, see the entry form on the Web site or visit www.netguide.com.au/win/terms/terms.php.

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GAMES
WAREHOUSE.COM.AU



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www.gameswarehouse.com.au



Web site of the month

Funology

www.funology.com

Funology.com is a fun site with lots of jokes and weird and wonderful information. In the That's Odd section, you'll find whacky, strange facts about all sorts of things from animals and the human body to the universe and nature — a good training ground for any aspiring trivia buff. In Brain Drains, you get to exercise your grey matter with brain teasers, quizzes and puzzles, then you can move on to play games and create craft projects in Boredom Busters. There's also a joke of the day, plus a jokes and riddles section, as well as science experiments, recipes and magic tricks to have fun with on the site. And mum and dad can rest easy, knowing that the Funology site is a great place for you to have fun online and stay safe at the same time. Keep this site up



your sleeve for when you want something to do over the school holidays — mum will never have to hear "I'm bored" again!

ezydvd
.com.au

Editor's pick

Zathura

PRICE \$32.83

WEB www.ezydvd.com.au

From a novel by the author of *Jumanji*, Chris Van Allsburg, comes yet another tale that will have you on the edge of your seat from the very beginning. As in *Jumanji*, the story revolves around a mysterious board game. When two brothers find a dusty old game and decide to play it, weird things start to happen all around them. When they open their front door to investigate strange noises outside, they find themselves in the middle of a meteorite shower — and that's not even close to the weirdest thing that's happened: their whole house is floating in outer space! It appears that starting the game has caused all their problems, so they figure the only way to get them back to earth is by playing the game to its end. Sounds simple, right? You couldn't be more wrong! *Zathura* is a cracking good adventure that you won't want to miss and the special effects are awesome.



Toy of the month

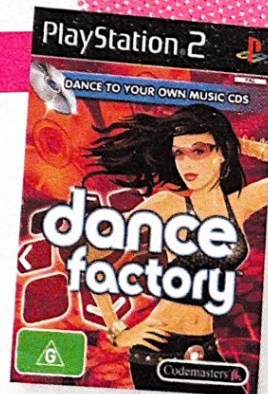
Dance Factory

RRP \$79.95

AGES From five years to adults

WEB www.atari.com.au

Dance Factory is a program for the PlayStation2 that will inject fun into any kids' party — or grownups' for that matter. The great thing about Dance Factory is that you're not limited to music that the manufacturer provides (five tracks are included) — you can dance along to any of the CDs in your music collection. You can even create your own choreography and challenge friends to see if they can make the grade. For group occasions, Dance Factory supports up to 16 players with special multiplayer contest options. But it's just as much fun to play on your own, and it's a great way to keep fit — a good excuse for you to give mum and dad when they complain about how much time you spend playing. There's even a calorie counter built into the program to prove your point! Along with the program CD, there's a dance mat included, so you're ready to go, straight out of the box. NetGuide



Time out

GAMES | JUST FOR KIDS | GADGETS | PC FUN



HP 39gs Graphing Calculator

RRP \$179

WEB www.hp.com/calculators

The HP 39gs is one serious calculator! It's suited to those studying subjects requiring higher order maths from high school to university level — definitely not one for the mathematically challenged, such as myself — and will handle any maths problem you can throw at it. The calculator has a large, clear screen that can be split to show two different windows of data at once and it features adjustable contrast for clearer viewing in different light conditions. For a calculator with so many features and functions, the keys are well-spaced and a surprisingly good size, so there's not that problem experienced with many calculators, where the wrong keys are pressed inadvertently because of the crowded architecture. A slide-off cover is also included to protect the screen, making it robust in either a school situation or on-site in a professional capacity. The calculator will interface with other 39gs calculators and your PC via USB, serial or infra-red ports for data sharing. You'll also find online tutorials for the calculator at the Web site above.

Reviews by Gail Lipscombe

Lap Tube

RRP \$19.75

PHONE Anyware Computer Accessories on 1300 269 927 for your nearest stockist.

WEB www.lapramp.com.au

If you're looking for a low-cost solution to keeping your laptop cool during operation, the Lap Tube is your answer. The concept is so simple. Made of black plastic, the Lap Tube is a 12in U-shaped tube that can expand to accommodate a 17in laptop. The tube can sit with either the bottom of the tube on your desk or lap, with your laptop resting on the upper edges, or in the reverse position. In the first position, rubberised edges grip the laptop underside; when reversed there are supplied non-skid strips to attach to your laptop and the Lap Tube. In either position, the Lap Tube elevates the back of your laptop to allow air to circulate under your machine and give you a more natural typing angle. Apart from the obvious advantages of extra ventilation for your laptop, there'll be no more hot laps this summer!

Mattel Cube World

RRP \$49.95 (pack of two)

WEB www.radicagames.com/cubeworld

Cube World is made up of small plastic cubes, about the size of a child's block, with each cube home to a different digital stick figure. Each character is engaged in a particular activity, such as playing ball, hanging out with their dog and so on. While that's pretty cool in itself, if you stack them next to or on top of each other, you can make your stick people interact with the inhabitants of adjoining cubes. For example, the character playing ball, when connected with the character with the dog, will throw the ball for the dog and the dog will chase it. Pressing the buttons on the front of a cube allows you to play with the character in the cube. Now, that's cool! The cubes also have motion sensors, so if you move one, the character inside will react. The ultimate toy for the bored executive! NetGuide

Time out

GAMES | JUST FOR KIDS | GADGETS **PC FUN**

Mindscape's Brain Trainer

RRP \$29.95

WEB www.mindscape.net.au

When it comes to the old grey matter, the saying 'use it or lose it' certainly holds true, with research showing that stimulating your brain with the mental aerobics of activities such as puzzles can help keep your mental faculties as sharp as a tack.

Mindscape's Brain Trainer is a simple and effective way to give your brain a good workout each day — and it's fun, too! It's never too early to start either, as this program is suitable for ages 10 to 110. The program's puzzles are divided into five categories targeting specific brain functions — logic, memory, numerical, spatial and verbal — and each category has three different types of puzzles to stretch you in that particular discipline. Each puzzle has five levels of difficulty, so you can go in easy and build up to harder ones as you improve your skills and confidence.

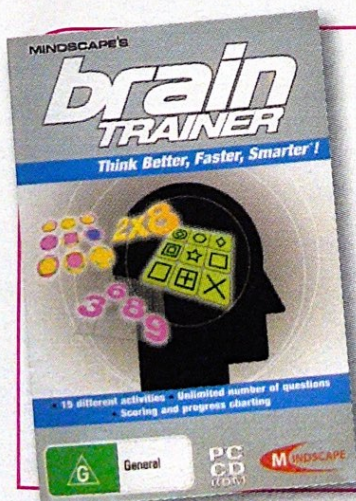
The puzzles have been chosen to build on your concentration, problem solving, reaction and verbal skills. There is a practice mode where you can familiarise yourself with the puzzles and the instructions on how to play, and you can stay in this mode for as long as you please. When you've got the gist of what's on offer, you can start taking the daily test and track your scores — hopefully watching them improve.

Reviews by Gail Lipscombe



The interface is customisable via a range of 'skins' (overlays that give a different look to the program), which can be changed whenever you feel the urge — with looks including Wild Thing, Red 3D and Puzzles (pictured here), you can have your puzzles fit your mood on the day.

So now, if you need some justification for all the time you spend doing puzzles on your PC, just tell people that you're working on your health! **NetGuide**



WIN 1 of 5 copies of Brain Trainer

Thanks to Mindscape (www.mindscape.net.au), five lucky NetGuide readers will win a copy of Brain Trainer, valued at \$29.95 each. For your chance to win and get your brain in tip-top shape, go to www.netguide.com.au/win, enter the username and password on page 6 and enter your details. Entries must be in by close of business December 12, 2006. For terms and conditions, see the entry form on the Web site or visit www.netguide.com.au/win/terms/terms.php. Authorised under NSW Permit No. TPL06/3265; ACT Permit No. TP06/1254



Gift shopping online

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BUY NOW

Is the thought of braving crowded shops and feral Christmas bargain hunters filling you with dread? **ALEX ZANDSTRA** has trawled the Net to bring you the best Christmas gift sites to make this year's shopping a fuss-free experience.

A recent survey by ACNielsen market researchers revealed that 5.9 million Australians now shop online. This is an increase of 13% over the past 12 months and, with Christmas just a breath away, we wouldn't be surprised to see this figure rise even further.

The choice of merchandise offered by online retailers is immense, which makes it an ideal place to hunt down gifts for almost everyone on your Christmas shopping list.

The convenience of shopping in the comfort of your own home is extremely appealing, particularly to the time-poor and crowd-phobic. And for people who find Christmas gift shopping 'all too hard', you'll rejoice to learn that you should be able to fill your entire gift list without exerting any more energy than it takes to tap a few keys on your keyboard. Even those of you who enjoy the excitement of the Christmas crowds, will find that if you buy a few gifts online, you'll have more time to spend on those very special purchases you want to make in person.

No crowds and great variety

One of the major benefits of doing your Christmas shopping online is that you avoid the crowds. And you don't need to hunt around for a parking space, walk for miles carrying all your shopping and then sit in traffic on the way home.

You have the most amazing choice of gifts at your fingertips, from books, CDs and DVDs to the latest cool gadgets and thrill-seeking experiences. You can buy lingerie, wine, gift vouchers, hampers, sports gear, toys, games and so much more. There's a much wider choice than you get at a shopping mall, and you won't wear yourself out in the process. Many retail sites also offer a gift wrapping service, which will be particularly appealing to those whose wrapping skills leave a bit to be desired!

Delivery issues

Having your purchases delivered to your door is a real plus especially for larger items. There is,

of course, a cost involved in this (although with the price of petrol and parking, it may not be a great deterrent), and you have to be at home to sign for the goods when they arrive.

With many of the online stores using Australia Post for deliveries, it means you'll be getting lots of those red and white cards in your letterbox if you're not home when they call. That may not necessarily be a problem if you can collect your goods during business hours, but if not, it's inconvenient. Find out from your local Post Office exactly when you can pick up your parcels; sometimes they'll let you collect them from the delivery dock early in the morning, or they might open for a few hours on a Saturday.

If that's all too hard, maybe you have a friend or relative who is usually at home and who would be happy to accept deliveries on your behalf. Another option is to have your goods delivered to your workplace (if that doesn't cause a problem).

Whatever you decide to do about delivery, remember to leave enough time for your gifts to arrive, so you can check them out and wrap them up in time for the big day!

No touching

Online gift shopping has many advantages, but one thing you can't do is physically pick up the



product and have a good look at it. Images have come a long way, but they're no substitute for actually handling the goods. However, most good online stores should have a decent description of the product on the site, and if that doesn't provide all the information you need, there should be a customer service contact number or an online enquiry form.

There are some other things that you can't do online, too, such as smell the perfume, check for ease of operation or feel the quality of the material, so for some gifts, a trip to the shops will still be necessary.



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*Limited period. Terms & conditions apply. See website.

www.ozrewards.com.au



It's worth a try

Even if you won't be doing all your Christmas shopping online, at least by doing some of it, you will have less to buy when you do hit the shops, which means you can take your time and enjoy yourself. Anything that makes Christmas less stressful is worth a try in our books, and you could be pleasantly surprised at how easy it is to buy gifts without leaving home.

We've visited some of the many Australian online gift stores to see what they're offering this year and to give you an idea of what you can expect. We've also done a bit of searching for you, to come up with some gift-specific sites, so you can head straight there if you want to buy, say, CDs or perfume. We've listed some directories of online shops so you can choose a few destinations for yourself, and some price comparison sites so you can get the best deals. And, finally, we've included some auction sites and the online shops of various not-for-profit organisations, for those gifts that keep on giving.

Happy shopping!

Stocking fillers

Does Santa visit on Christmas Eve, and is he a little stuck for goodies to fill the waiting stockings? Have a look on these sites for inspiration, Santa!

TWOdollarshop

www.twodollars.com.au

TWOdollars.com.au is an online bargain shop, just like the physical stores. You'll find bargains galore to fill up those Christmas stockings.

e.l.f.

www.eyeslipsface.com.au

All Eyes Lips Face cosmetics can be purchased for \$2.95 each — excellent stocking fillers!



Wishlist

www.wishlist.com.au

Wishlist offers a wonderful assortment of gifts and some great extras to help you find that perfect gift for just about anyone. If you're 'just looking', you can browse through the departments, which include Beauty and Fragrances, Baby and Kids, Games and Sport, Home and Garden and many more. If you've no idea what to buy, try Wishlist's gift finder service, which lets you search for suitable gifts by a range of criteria including price, age, relationship and even personality type. Last-minute buyers are also well catered for, with a handy delivery calculator to see if your gift will arrive in time, and if you're really stuck, you could choose a gift voucher.

Latest Buy

www.latestbuy.com.au

Latest Buy is a great place to go to find a gift that's a bit different. Finding a suitable gift is as simple as selecting the Gift Finder link, choosing a personality type, such as Techno Junkie, Couch Potato or Big Kid, and clicking Find. Is there someone in your life who might appreciate a remote-controlled stealth bomber or some inflatable boxing gloves? The gift range is so unusual that you might like to spend a little time browsing through the categories or the list of top sellers.

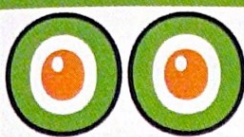
Innovations

www.innovations.com.au

Innovations has got Christmas organised for you. You can buy all your Christmas home and table decorations as well as gifts. Its Christmas catalogue is available online and if you click on an item, you will be taken straight through to the product on the site, where you can place an order. If you can't find what you want in the Christmas section, there are plenty of other categories to choose from, including Health and Beauty, Bedding, Apparel and Entertainment.

Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Sony Ericsson, Nokia, Leatherman,

ool, Speedo, Rotring, Wenger, Panasonic, Dior, Waterman, Akai, Gucci



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Entries close December 12, 2006. Authorised under NSW Permit No. TPL06/3265; ACT Permit No. ACT TP06/1254.

Gifts Australia

<http://giftsaustralia.com.au>

You won't have any trouble finding a gift on this site! There's an enormous range in over 18 categories including Christmas. It's got everyone covered — even the cigar smoker! For the sports lover in your life, check out the AFL thongs, and for the animal lover how about a pet carry bag or a glow lead? They also offer a range of online gift vouchers, starting from \$50. Special offer for *NetGuide* readers, visit www.netguide.com.au/special_offers.

Tesora

www.tesora.com.au

The Tesora gift site is arranged into helpful categories such as For Him, For Her, For Kids and so on. In the Lifestyle section, you'll find gifts for the house, garden, kitchen and more, and there's a good range of gift vouchers on offer from \$25. It also has a range of cool stuff in the Gizmos section, including MP3 and MPEG-4 players, lights and lasers, cool watches and a category especially for geeks!

Fun Gifts

www.fungifts.com.au

This is the place to look for something for the gourmet traveller in your life. The gifts are presented in a hamper along with gift notes that explain the contents of the box. There are recipe gifts, food gifts, drink gifts, even course gifts which include

everything you need to learn all about things such as coffee, wine and cheese, olives, chocolates and more. You can pick your country of origin to suit your traveller, so, for example, you can select from Indian, Mexican, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese and Moroccan gifts, as well

as Australian. You can also use the gift search feature to narrow down the selection to a range suitable to your budget or recipient.

Simply Gifts

www.simplygifts.com.au

Simply Gifts has a stylish, clean interface that invites you in to explore its range of gifts for him, her, baby and more. There's a selection of Christmas hampers and gourmet gifts and you can browse by lifestyle, price and recipient. Although there are some quite expensive items on the site, there were plenty listed when we selected gifts under \$60, plus there's a range of gift vouchers starting from \$20.

Everything but flowers

<http://everythingbutflowers.com.au>

You're going to find it hard to go past this site for sheer volume of gift ideas — that is, unless you want flowers! As the name suggests, you'll find 'Everything but flowers' and it means everything: gift vouchers, hampers, experiences, alcohol, gadgets, magazine subscriptions, books, games, luxury and outdoor gifts. You can also buy a range of gift cards for leading retailers such as Myer, Dymocks, David Jones, Hoyts, Bunnings and others. As well as browsing through the categories, you can list gifts for him, her and kids or you can select gifts by price — we selected gifts under \$75 and were presented with 21 pages crammed full of ideas.

Last Minute

<http://au.lastminute.com>

On the Last Minute Web site, you'll find a broad range of categories in the gifts section including fashion and accessories, fragrances and cosmetics, chocolates and lollies, bottle shop and more. There are also sections of gifts for him, for kids and for the home, as well as a random selection called 'Need Inspiration?' If that doesn't help, you could also check out the Bargain Corner, or get some ideas from the Best Sellers list.

SEARCH

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BUY NOW

Cool Things

www.coolthings.com.au

Cool Things offers such a fun range of gifts, you just have to take a look for the sheer novelty factor. Its categories have names like Cool Science, Cool Flying Things, Cool Summer Things and Cool Water Things, and examples of the unusual gifts you'll find include LED ice cubes that glow in your drink, a Zoingo Boingo (the latest in pogo sticks) and a mood cylinder. There are also lists of popular gifts, special offers and the latest additions to the site. You can view gifts by price range and there are \$25, \$50 and \$100 gift vouchers available.

Online department stores

Just as you might visit Myer or David Jones to do your Christmas shopping, the following sites offer a similar department store experience online.

BuyQuick

www.buyquick.com.au

As well as a range of departments offering computers, cosmetics, DVDs and games, BuyQuick has a very handy gift ideas section to help you narrow down your choice.



Aggeggi

<http://aggeggi.com>

The unusual name of this site announces its range of rather different products. With an emphasis on design and innovation, it aims to bring you inspiring, innovative and beautifully designed products.

Deals Direct

www.dealsdirect.com.au

You will know something about the range of products offered by Deals Direct from its regular product giveaways in *NetGuide*. Christmas is a great time to explore its fantastic range at discounted prices.

dStore

<http://dstore.com.au>

dStore is a huge online department store




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Choose from over 250 leading online Emailcash Reward Partners, including Music, Hi-Tech & Clothing Shops! Get guaranteed rewards when you shop at EmailCash.

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Overstock Outlet

www.oo.com.au

Overstock Outlet buys up overstocked items from retailers and manufacturers and offers them to the public on its Web site. You'll find brand-name products at greatly discounted prices in a huge range of categories including electronics, clothing, shoes and accessories, DVDs, CDs and Entertainment, Homewares and a whole lot more. Special offer for *NetGuide* readers, visit www.netguide.com.au/special_offers.



Experiences

Some people prefer to do things rather than acquire things, and if you have a few of these people in your circle of friends, you could find the perfect gift for them on one of the following 'experience' gift sites.



FreemanX

www.freemanx.com.au

FreemanX provides a fantastic range of experiences you can give to a friend by way of a gift voucher. And if you can't decide which adventure to give, you can opt for a flexi-voucher, which lets the recipient choose. So, for great fun on land, sea or in the air, have a look at this site, and if you've left things rather to the last minute, don't panic, you can email a voucher almost instantly.

Surprise in a Box

www.surpriseinabox.com.au

If you really want to make someone's day, why not choose a memorable experience for them and gift wrap it in a box? How about a flying trapeze workshop or a gliding experience? Or for those who want to get started on something new, a surfing lesson or a tandem skydive?

Red Balloon Days

www.redballoondays.com.au

Red Balloon Days offers a diverse range of experiences all around Australia. From a horsedrawn wagon tour of the Swan Valley in WA to a gelato sampling workshop in Sydney, you're sure to find that special gift to please even the most difficult friend or relative. But if you can't decide which experience they'll enjoy the most, give them a voucher so they can choose for themselves.

Adrenalin

www.adrenalin.com.au

Do you have a friend or relative who is a bit of a thrillseeker? Well, your Christmas dilemma is all but solved. Head straight for Adrenalin and discover some great heart-pumping adventures you can give at the simple click of a button.



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Selling Online – Payment gateways

One of the biggest dilemmas in selling online is determining how you will accept payments. Your customers want to receive your goods or services in a timely manner and by choosing to take payments via invoice or cheque you waste valuable time, both yours and your customers. In addition you have more overheads in collecting the money and following up those customers who are not prompt payers. By using a payment gateway, such as eWAY, you receive instant satisfaction and ship the goods in the knowledge that the funds have reached your bank account.

Automate your credit card payments from your website

What is a payment gateway?

A payment gateway connects directly to your Internet merchant banking facility allowing you to accept credit card payments at the time of purchase. All you need to do is some simple linking from your shopping cart checkout page to the payment gateway. The money is typically deposited into your merchant account within three seconds of the customer making payment. If the credit card has insufficient funds or is no longer active you will also know immediately.

What does a payment gateway actually do?

Every time a customer makes a purchase on your website, they enter their credit card details on an SSL Secured checkout page, which is then sent through to the merchant bank via the payment

gateway. The merchant bank will then process the transaction, and pass the result back to your website. From this response, you can determine whether the transaction was successful, and respond by shipping the goods or activating your service.

What banking facilities do I need to use a payment gateway?

To use a payment gateway you must have an internet merchant facility. This is an Internet specific facility linking the payment gateway to your merchant bank. The benefit of this solution over other popular payment solutions is that you retain total control over all funds processed. The payment gateway never actually holds the funds acting as a bridge between your website and your bank account.

How do I get started?

There are a number of payment gateways offering different services. eWAY is Australia's leading payment gateway and is fully Australian owned and operated. eWAY understands the complexity of starting your Internet business and has been helping thousands of Australian businesses for over eight years.

The eWAY website provides a wealth of support information on integrating real time payments into your website including free sample code. There are over 60 Shopping Carts worldwide that support the eWAY solution. eWAY also provides free online reporting assisting you to reconcile your bank account. To help minimise

online fraud eWAY provides free tools to help deter fraud, providing you with peace of mind in trading online.

What help is available?

eWAY offers several free tools to assist your business in beginning to accept payments online. In the 'Getting Started' section of the eWAY website www.eway.com.au there are several wizards to assist you including:

- Shopping Cart Wizard
- Banking Requirements Wizard
- Business Plan Wizard

Not using eWAY? Make the change today!

Are you using another payment gateway or payment solution to accept credit card payments on your website? Make the change to Australia's leading payment gateway, and pay no set up fee, no yearly fee, no monthly fees and all you pay is a discounted transaction rate*!

* Conditions apply see the eWAY website for details.

eWAY Australia's best value payment gateway.

For more information visit www.eway.com.au

phone 1800 10 65 65 or email sales@eway.com.au.

What eWAY customers say

"eWAY is reliable, easy to set up and inexpensive. What more can you want from a payment gateway?"

Howard Kadetz - Developer
HK Programming



Visit eway.com.au
or call 1800 10 65 65



if it was delivered to your door each time. Why not give someone a magazine subscription this Christmas — it's something a bit different for that person who seems to have everything.

Magshop

<http://magshop.com.au>

Magshop is an online shop for Australia and New Zealand's leading magazines. If you know the title of the magazine you want to subscribe to, you can go straight to it, but if you are not sure what would be suitable, try the gift ideas section.

iSubscribe

www.isubscribe.com.au

iSubscribe offers subscriptions to a range of magazines, trade publications and newspapers on its Web site. If you click on the Gift Subs tab, you'll find a Subscriber Decider that will help you select a suitable title in a price range that suits your budget.

Gift vouchers

You can never go wrong if you give someone a gift voucher, because when all the Christmas hype has died down, they'll still have the excitement of using their gift voucher to buy something they really want.

giftvouchers.com

www.giftvouchers.com

On the giftvouchers.com Web site, you can buy a gift voucher as a present and have it sent directly to the recipient. You'll be surprised at the number and variety of vouchers you can buy. You can either select a retailer such as the ABC Shop, Angus & Coote or Country Road, or you can choose by occasion, interest, relationship or price. If you can't decide, there's a supervoucher, which lets the recipient choose for themselves.

eVoucher

www.evoucher.com.au

It's easy to buy a gift voucher from eVoucher.

All you have to do is select the type of voucher you want to have, either for a retailer, shopping centre, online retailer and so on. You can then click through for more information, and if you decide to buy one, just select 'Order an eVoucher', add a greeting, select a delivery date and it's done.

Perfumes

Perfume is one of the easiest gifts to buy online, as long as you know the one you want. If you don't, take a trip to your local perfumery for a test run first, and then you can search online for the best price. We've listed just a few of the many online perfume retailers so you get an idea of what's available.

eFragrance

www.efragrance.com.au

StrawberryNet

www.strawberrynet.au.com

Fresh

www.fragrancesandcosmetics.com.au

Perfume Empire

www.perfumeempire.com.au

Perfume Connection

www.perfumeconnection.com.au

perfume.com.au

www.perfume.com.au

MySuperDeals

<http://mysuperdeals.com.au>

Perfumes Online

www.perfumesonline.com.au

Gift hampers

It's so exciting to receive a gift hamper as a present — you can't wait to rip off the wrapping and see what's inside. If there's someone you know who'd enjoy a basket of goodies this Christmas, take a look at some of these sites.

Gift Sensations

www.giftsensations.com.au

Gifts Made Easy

www.giftsmadeeasy.com.au

The Complete Basketcase

www.completebasketcase.com.au

Fruit only

www.fruitonly.com.au

Hamper Creations

www.hampercreations.com.au

Basket Basket

www.basket-basket.com.au

Pamper Hamper Gifts

www.pamperhampergifts.com.au



Flowers

It is just lovely to have a beautiful gift of flowers delivered to your door at Christmas time. Not only do you have the pleasure of receiving such a gorgeous gift, but you can use it to decorate your home. Flowers are also a great gift to send overseas. Feast your eyes on some of the offerings on these sites — they're stunning.

Roses Only

www.rosesonly.com.au

Teleflora

www.teleflora.com.au

Interflora

www.interflora.com.au

Flying Flowers

www.flyingflowers.com.au

The Flower Factory

www.florist.com.au

Fastflowers

www.fastflowers.com.au

Petals

www.petals.com.au

DVDs, CDs, video games

CDs and DVDs are always a great gift to receive, and a new game to play on your PC or games console is a welcome present for any gamer. They're easy to give, too, if you order them online. It's a straightforward process of selecting what you want and heading for the checkout.

DirtCheapCDs

www.dirtcheapcds.com.au

Budget priced CDs and DVDs.

DVD Orchard

www.dvdorchard.com.au

CDs, DVDs, PC and console games.

JB Hi-Fi

www.jbhifionline.com.au

CDs, DVDs, console games and gift vouchers.

HMV

www.hmv.com.au

CDs and DVDs.

EzyDVD

www.ezydvd.com.au

DVDs.

Games Warehouse

www.gameswarehouse.com.au

Computer and console games.

Gamehead

www.gamehead.com.au

Computer and console games.

ABC Shop

<http://shop.abc.net.au>

CDs, DVDs, audio CDs, books, magazines, clothing, toys.

Toys and games

Christmas is a wonderful time for new toys and games — everyone is in a playful mood, especially

the kids. If you're finding it hard to decide what to give a young person this year, you could save your legs and do a lot of the hunting around online. These sites are just a sample of the many toy stores you'll find on the Internet.

Games Paradise

www.gamesparadise.com.au

Board games, card games, jigsaws and puzzles.

Fun Delivered

www.fundelivered.com.au

Toys, games and puzzles for infants to adults.

Peanut Gallery

www.peanutgallery.com.au

Wooden toys, soft toys, puzzles, games, music, art, craft and more, for children under 8 years.

PeeDee Toys

www.peedeetoys.com.au

A complete toy store online.

Mumsweb

www.mumsweb.com.au

Head for the Mumsweb toy store for a huge range of toys for all ages.

Toys and more!

www.toysandmore.com.au

A great range of toys for babies to teenagers, plus a handy gift finder and a super search feature.

Kidsbits

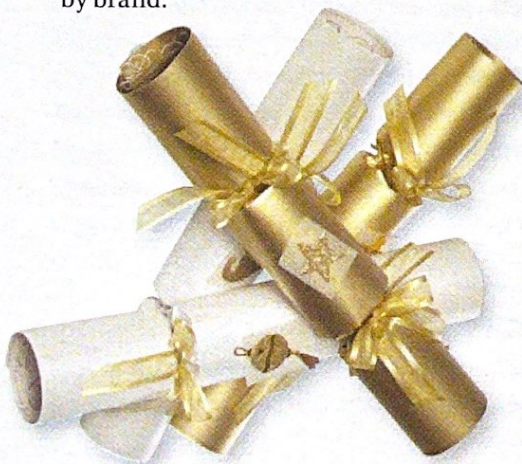
www.kidsbits.com.au

Toys, puzzles, art and craft suitable for early childhood fun.

iQ Toys

www.iqtoys.com.au

Shop by age (0 - 10yrs+), shop by price, shop by brand.



Books

With a bit of time on our hands, and a new year on the horizon, it's a great time of year to stock up on reading material. Lose yourself for a while in some of the online bookstores listed below. You may well find the perfect gift for a friend or relative, and maybe one or two for yourself while you're there.

Amazon

www.amazon.com

Dymocks

www.dymocks.com.au

Angus & Robertson

www.angusrobertson.com.au

Booktopia

www.booktopia.com.au

Collins Books

www.collinsbooks.com.au

Australian Online Bookshop

www.bookworm.com.au

Readers Refuge

www.readersrefuge.com.au

Gleebooks

www.gleebooks.com.au

Abbeys

www.abbeys.com.au

SEARCH

MORE INFO

GET PRICE

ADD TO CART

BUY NOW

Charity gifts

We found a wonderful selection of gifts offered by not-for-profit organisations in addition to the traditional charity Christmas cards. You can provide real assistance to people in need by giving a veggie pack to help a family feed themselves, or school books so a child can receive an education. You can also find some unusual gifts, and some practical ones, such as sunscreen, T-shirts and mugs.

Oxfam

www.oxfamunwrapped.com.au

UNICEF

<http://merchandise.unicef.org.au>

The Cancer Council

<http://tinyurl.com/nn7nj>

Save Money. Save Time. Stress-Free Xmas Shopping @ www.digitalhome.com.au



ONE REMOTE FOR ALL
Logitech universal remote manages all your devices. Easy setup from the web. **save \$120 NOW \$279**

SENNHEISER



OMX90 STYLE HEADPHONES
Stunning design. Amazing sound. Patented moulding fits perfectly to any ear. **save \$12 NOW \$97**



WIRELESS SURROUND SPEAKERS

315W speaker system eliminate messy speaker wire criss-crossing your room. **save \$187 NOW \$612**



HOME THEATRE SPEAKER PACK

U.K. Hi-Fi surround sound speakers includes floor standing speakers, centre speaker, rear surround and massive sub-woofer. **save \$1299! NOW \$799**



JBL ONTIME TIME MACHINE!

Wake up to the sounds of your favourite tunes with the JBL alarm clock+iPod* **NOW \$388**

SENNHEISER



NO MORE BACKGROUND NOISE!

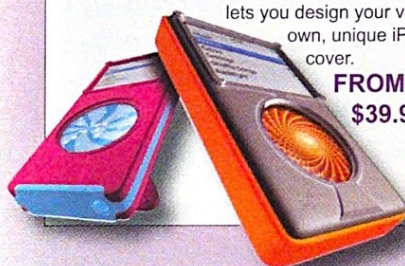
Listen to your music as it was meant to be - without annoying background noises. Perfect for public transport & aeroplanes. **save \$88 NOW \$312**

DESIGN YOUR OWN iPod CASE



With over 1 million combinations, our online tool lets you design your very own, unique iPod cover.

FROM \$39.95



ACER 20" LCD Monitor

Share your music everywhere with this awesome portable iPod Boombox by Altec-Lansing **save \$550 NOW \$549**

STORE EVERYTHING WITH UP TO 500GB!



Backup ALL your documents, music, movies and digital photographs with the Maxtor OneTouch Personal Hard Drive.

500GB from \$512

digitalhome

www.digitalhome.com.au

or **1300 887 257**



World Vision

www.worldvision.com.au/smiles

Australian Red Cross

www.redcross.org.au/howyoucanhelp_eshops.htm

Amnesty International

<http://shop.amnesty.org.au>

TEAR

www.tear.org.au/giftcatalogue



Auction sites

Auction sites can be a good place to do your Christmas shopping, just be sure to check that there is enough time for delivery after the closing date of the auction, or choose a 'Buy Now' option.

Oztion

www.oztion.com.au

eBay

www.ebay.com.au

Grays online

www.graysonline.com.au



Directories of shopping sites

We've provided you with a snapshot of online stores where you can do your Christmas shopping, but the list could go on for ever. So, in case we haven't given you enough places to visit, we've listed some of the shopping site directories, so you can hunt out other stores for yourself.

Christmas decorations

Are last year's Christmas decorations looking a bit tired and the ones in the shops a bit same-old? Have a look on these sites to see if something takes your fancy.

Everything Christmas

www.everythingchristmas.com.au

eChristmas

www.echristmas.com.au



ShopSafe Australia

www.shopsafe.com.au

This site lists stores that it's checked for security, delivery and more and gives them a star rating. It also has a great gift-finder section.

EmailCash

www.emailcash.com.au

Want to be rewarded for shopping online? Then head for the online shopping section of the EmailCash Web site and visit one of their reward partners to do your shopping.

ninemsn shopping

<http://shopping.ninemsn.com.au>

Half a million products from over 300 online stores — that's what you'll find on the ninemsn shopping site. It also has a very useful comparison shopping feature, so once you've found the gift you want, you can make sure you're paying the best price.

Yahoo!7 shopping

<http://shopping.yahoo.com.au>

You can shop without dropping on the Yahoo!7 shopping site. There are so many products from so many stores; you could probably fill your whole Christmas list in just one place. There is also a comparison feature on the site, that let's you see what price each store is charging for a particular item.

Australian Gifts Online

www.australiangiftsonline.com.au

This owners of this site have surfed the Web looking for the best gifts at the best prices, and they present them all to you in an appealing, easy-to-navigate site.

OzRewards

www.ozrewards.com.au

As the name suggests, this site rewards you for shopping with the retailers listed in its shopping directory.

Comparison sites

Once you've found the gift you want, you can check on one of these sites to see if you're getting the best value online. Below is a list of sites that will compare prices for you on a wide range of products. For more specialised comparison sites, see the September 2006 issue of *NetGuide* magazine.

DoorOne

www.doorone.com.au

DoorOne.com.au is an extremely comprehensive comparison site offering a huge range of products in one convenient location. You can easily narrow your search results by a variety of criteria including price, brand and more. Then you can select products to compare features and price. It provides some handy buyers' guides, a Top 5 by popularity in most sections, and some quick links to comparisons of 'hot' products.

Shopping.com

<http://au.shopping.com>

Find, compare and buy — that's what Shopping.com aims to help you do. It brings together thousands of products from a wide range of shops, so you have the convenience of seeing them all in one place. Categories of products include computers, electronics, health and beauty, home and garden, books, movies and much more. It's well worth a look to see if it can help you grab the best buy on the Net.

Myshopping.com.au

www.myshopping.com.au

This comparison site is aiming to list every product that can be bought in Australia from every store, so you won't have to go anywhere else to do your shopping! And it seems it's right on track. It has an enormous range, but there are plenty of options to narrow your search.

Getprice

www.getprice.com.au

This easy-to-navigate site has a simple advanced



search feature that lets you narrow down your choice. Price comparison is simple, and it offers a range of value-add features such as a graphical display of products' price history and the ability to set up a notification alert if the price drops.

ninemsn shopping

<http://shopping.ninemsn.com.au>

You just keep refining your search on the ninemsn shopping site by selecting a category, brand, price range or seller, and then sorting the results by price, most popular, user rating and more. When you have just a few products left, you can compare them side by side, and finally click through to the retailer to make your purchase.


Yahoo!7 shopping

<http://shopping.yahoo.com.au>

You can use the Yahoo!7 shopping site to find and compare products in a wide range of departments including electronics, computers and software, household appliances, phones, music, DVDs and more.

BuyFast

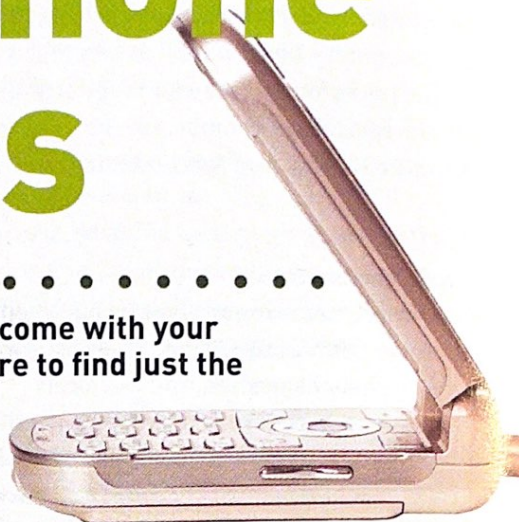
www.buyfast.com.au

BuyFast lets you search a range of shops for books, DVDs, games, perfume, music and more so you can compare prices and get the best deal. 



Mobile phone ringtones

Don't settle for the boring old ringtones that come with your mobile phone. **ALEX ZANDSTRA** reveals where to find just the right tune to make you stand out in a crowd.



With an increasing number of people using their mobile phones to access information such as news, sports results and weather, you'd think that the humble ringtone would be losing ground. But that's not so, according to the Australian Mobile Phone Lifestyle Index. The report, published in May 2006, found that almost half of the mobile phone users surveyed had purchased at least one ringtone during the previous 12 months.

So it seems the ringtone is still a popular way of personalising your mobile phone, and if you're one of those users still playing the same old tune, maybe it's time to get more adventurous.

If you own a fairly old handset, you may only

be able to access monophonic tones, but if you have WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) or GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) on your phone, you will have a much wider choice. If you're uncertain what sort of tone you can download, don't worry, as most of the sites have a list of compatible handsets with each tone, so you can check.

The cost of a ringtone can vary from around \$3.95 to \$6.60, so if you download just one, it isn't exactly going to break the bank. Remember, though: you need to factor in the cost your service provider charges for SMS messages and wireless downloads.

Have a search and listen on some of the sites below and see if you can find a ringtone that's a little bit more 'you' than the one you're using now.

Jamster

www.jamster.com.au

Jamster offers a wide range of polyphonic ringtones in genres such as hip hop, soul, rock, pop and funk as well as Crazy Frog sounds, footy anthems, and movie and TV theme tunes. They'll cost you \$5 for a single download, but less if you join the Jamster Club. However, be aware that club membership costs — read the small print carefully. Once you've purchased your ringtone,



you will receive a message with a download link. Click on the link and the ringtone will download onto your phone (you need to have WAP set up).

BlueSkyFrog

www.blueskyfrog.com

BlueSkyFrog offers ringtones in polyphonic, monophonic, true tone and other styles. They have a good selection of genres, too, including alternative, classical, dance, jazz, pop, rock and many more. You can order a tone by SMS, which will cost you between \$4.50 and \$6.60, or if you're on a pre-paid or capped plan, you can call a 1900 number at a cost of \$2.75 to \$3.30 per minute. For each ringtone, there is a drop-down list of compatible phones.

iaMobile

www.iamobile.com.au

The first thing you need to do on the iaMobile site is select your network, handset make and model. Then you will be presented with lists of ringtones that are compatible with your phone. They have Music TruTones, Polyphonic Tones and FX Tones. They also have some fun Voice TruTones, where you can select your name — "Phone call for YOUR NAME" — or a short phrase such as "It's yo mama". Prices vary from \$3.95 to \$6.60 and you will need to call a 1900 number, unless you are an Optus customer, in which case, you can download directly from the Optus Zoo Arcade.

BigPond Mobile Fun

<http://mobilefun.telstra.com>

At the BigPond Mobile Fun centre, you can find True Tones, Poly Ringtones and Real Tones in a range of categories as diverse as classical, heavy metal, country and Ministry of Sound. The tones are available to Telstra, Optus and Vodafone customers, but prices for Telstra customers are usually cheaper. They range from \$3.95 to \$5.55. Check out its Caller Tones, too; they replace the boring 'ring-ring' sound your caller hears before you answer.

Which tone?

Monophonic tone

This is the older-style ringtone, composed of single notes on a single instrument.

Polyphonic tone

A polyphonic tone is composed using a combination of instruments, so it is more like real music.

True tone

A true tone is an actual song, and it is usually performed by the original artist.

Real tone

A real tone is a real-life sound, such as a telephone ringing or a dog barking. Some sites call these tones Sound FX.



FairfaxDigital Mobile Centre

<http://mobile.fairfax.com.au>

Fairfax's mobile centre has polyphonic, monophonic, covertone, truetone, and realtone sounds for your mobile. They all come in a range of categories including classical, jazz, pop and rock, plus there are lists of best sellers and new releases to choose from. Once you have decided on a tone, you will need to select your handset to ensure compatibility and then send an SMS message. You need GPRS activated on your phone and some services and phone plans are not catered for, so be sure to check on the site. Costs range from \$3.95 to \$6.60.

Femail

www.femail.com.au/ringtones-wallpaper.htm

Femail online magazine offers a great selection of mobile phone ringtones on its Web site. Polyphonics, True Tones and Mono Ringtones can all be ordered by SMS at a cost of \$6.60 each. Each style has a list of compatible handsets, and instructions on how to obtain your ringtone. Genres include the Australian charts, easy listening, past hits, soul, rock and seasonal.

OptusZoo

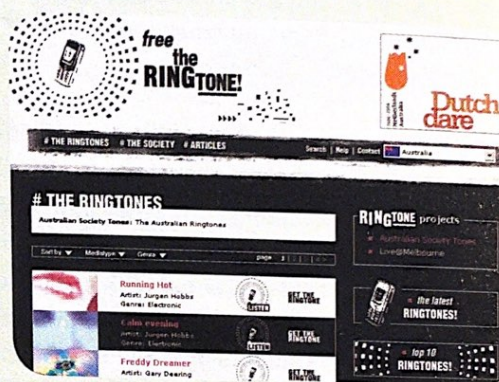
www.optuszoo.com.au

On the OptusZoo Web site, you'll find trutones for \$5.50, Polyphonic tones for \$4.50, monophonic tones for \$2.95 and soundFX

The Ringtone Society

www.ringtonesociety.com.au

Believe it or not, Australia now has a Ringtone Society with a mission "to liberate the world of banal ringtones". The Society was previously based in Holland and hosted only international ringtone compositions, but following a project run during the recent Melbourne International Arts Festival, original Australian compositions are being added to the catalogue. Check out the sounds on the Society's Web site, and if any of them take your fancy, you can download them for \$3.



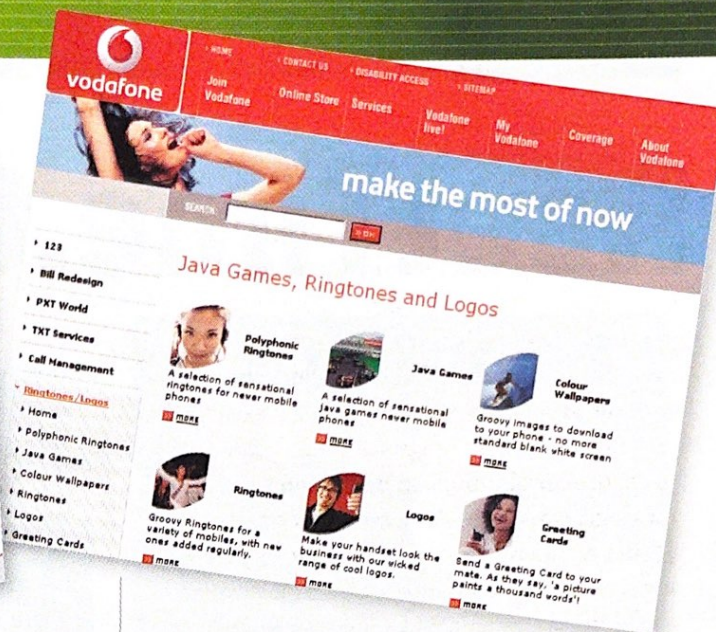
for between \$4.50 and \$5.50. You need to be an Optus customer and register on the site. You'll find a huge range of tunes, but you can sort the lists by song title, artist and genre, or you can use the search facility to look for a particular song. If you hear a tune that you know someone will love, there's a facility to 'Send to a Friend'.

Vodafone

<http://ringtones.vodafone.com.au>

Vodafone has polyphonic and monophonic tones on its Web site in a range of genres. You will need to register on the site to buy them, and there's a long list of compatible phones for you to check. It costs \$3.30 for each tone, and you have a wide





selection to choose from, including Oz Music, Pop, Rock & Metal, Latest Releases, as well as cartoon sounds, Star Wars themes, National Anthems and Sporting Anthems.

Virgin

www.virginmobile.com.au/vibe/download.html

Virgin Mobile customers are able to access polyphonic ringtones on the Virgin mobile Web site in categories such as Best Sellers, Let's Rock, Soundtracks, Made in Australia, Orchestral, Romantic Mood and more. They cost between \$3.95 and \$5.95 and you order the tone via SMS.

Australian Idol tones

<http://tinyurl.com/y73jcm>

If you are a big fan of *Australian Idol*, you can 'Idolise your mobile' thanks to BigPond! For something a bit different, listen to the tones that will make you cringe, from way back at the beginning of the series — if nothing else, they'll raise a smile! You can also get Audition tones, sounds from the semi-finals, the wildcard show and through to the finals series. The ringtones are available in monophonic, polyphonic and truetone styles. They also have Idol Caller Tones, which replace the ringing tone that a person hears when they call you. [NetGuide](#)

WIN 1 of 6 copies of RingtoneStudio 2

RingtoneStudio 2 lets you create your own ringtone from any audio source and convert it into a format suitable for your mobile phone. Thanks to Manacomm (www.manac.com.au), we have six copies of RingtoneStudio 2, valued at \$29.95 each, to give away this month. To enter this competition, go to www.netguide.com.au/win, enter the username and password on page 6, and enter your details. Entries must be in by close of business December 12, 2006. For terms and conditions, see the entry form on the Web site and visit www.netguide.com.au/win/terms/terms.php.

Authorised under NSW Permit No. TPL06/3265; ACT Permit No. TP06/1254





Review by Alex Kidman

ReelTime.tv

→ www.reeltime.tv

Some pundits reckon that the vast majority of broadband use in Australia is for downloading TV programmes — illegally. ReelTime offers a broadband-based legitimate movie and TV download service that works with any ISP and, thanks to deals with most of the major content owners, offers a much wider potential range of both films and TV than any other currently available Australian TV/movie download service.

Once you've loaded the ReelTime Web application — and the digital rights management software that ReelTime uses makes the service an Internet Explorer-only experience — you're presented with a very slick and quick-responding search interface that allows you to check out trailers for just about everything on offer for free, or add films/shows to your download cart. These are then downloaded via a separate application that also acts as the viewing application.

Shows are downloaded once and can then be kept for up to a month before they'll self-destruct, but once you start watching something, it's got a ticking bomb shelf life of only 24 hours. ReelTime's service, of which we had a preview,



was speedy enough on a decent broadband connection, with most movies clocking in around 1G in length, although TV show file sizes varied by quite a margin.

The asking price for movies (typically \$7), once you factor in the convenience of not having to hit the video store — or miss out on a film you've been hankering after — is pretty decent, although the TV shows (typically \$3) are arguably a bit expensive on a per-show basis, especially when you consider how cheaply some DVD box sets go for these days. **NetGuide**

WIN 1 OF 50 \$10 CREDITS TO REELTIME.TV

Thanks to ReelTime.tv, 50 lucky **NetGuide** readers will win a \$10 credit to its service. For your chance to win, go to www.netguide.com.au/win, enter the username and password on page 6 and enter your details. Entries must be in by close of business December 12, 2006. For terms and conditions, see the entry form on the Web site or visit www.netguide.com.au/win/terms/terms.php. Authorised under NSW Permit No. TPL06/3265; ACT Permit No. TP06/1254





Virtual tours

Travel Australia without leaving your chair.

Australian War Memorial

www.awm.gov.au/virtualtour

Not everyone can get to visit the Australian War Memorial in Canberra in person, but on its Web site, you can take a virtual tour and see some of the highlights. Take a look at the Commemorative Area, the Aircraft Hall, the Anzac Hall and more. Each section describes what you will find there and is accompanied by 360° panoramas as well as some still photographs.

National Museum of Australia

www.nma.gov.au/visit/virtual_tour

This tour gives you a good idea of what there is to see at the National Museum of Australia. Starting with the exterior, you can see the bright red and orange entrance, the Braille Wall, the Garden of Australian Dreams and more. Inside you'll visit the massive Main Hall, Circa (the rotating theatre space), and find information on other areas. Then you can visit the exhibitions: Tangled Destinies, Eternity, Nation and more, each with its own introduction, highlights and explanations.

Royal Australian Navy

www.navy.gov.au/vf

If you've ever wanted to crawl all over submarines, warships and helicopters, this site will have you spellbound. The Royal Australian Navy virtual



fleet puts you on and below deck and gives you a real insight into what it's like on board. Select from a range of frigates, destroyers, submarines and more, read all about them and then take the tour.



Sydney Opera House

www.sydneyoperahouse.com/sections/tours/virtual_tour

You'll be glued to your screen from the moment you click on the yellow arrow to enter the virtual Opera House. You can visit almost everywhere by clicking on the little yellow balls on the 3D map, or on the arrows that appear in the panoramas as you take in the view. From orchestra pits to scenery lifts, the drama theatre to the shells, you can visit it all, and if you click on Tour Guide wherever you are, you can read all about the area you are visiting.

Questacon

<http://virtual.questacon.edu.au/main.html>

Questacon, Australia's biggest science exhibit, is open to the public at all hours, thanks to this wonderful virtual tour. You can either leisurely stroll your way through the levels, or go directly to a particular area you want to visit. Green spirals lead you from one panorama to another and, in some sections, you can take a closer look at the fascinating exhibits. This will most definitely whet your appetite for a visit in person.

Sun protection

Slip, slop, slap!

NSW Cancer Council

www.nswcc.org.au/editorial.asp?pageid=397

The NSW Cancer Council's sun protection section opens with the words "One in two people who grow up here get some form of skin cancer at some time!" That's a pretty scary statistic, but the site offers some great advice on saving your skin, what type of sunscreen to use, spots to watch, the importance of shade and plenty more. It also talks about sun protection at different ages, such as toddlers and babies, primary school children and over 55s. There's a complete guide to skin clinics — how to choose one, the costs involved and so on — plus a 10-question myth-busting quiz to test your sun protection knowledge.

Better Health

<http://tinyurl.com/e937u>

The skin cancer section of the Better Health Web site is a great source of information on topics such as early detection of skin cancer, protection for outdoor workers, sunburn, risk factors and early signs. There's a skin cancer risk quiz that will help you assess your risk level, a Q & A section and a special section on protecting children's skin in the early years.

Child and Youth Health

<http://tinyurl.com/qe2ab>

This site concentrates on protecting children from sun damage, from as early as during pregnancy. It discusses using sunglasses and sunscreens on babies, how to treat sunburn, protection from suitable clothing and hats, and it also covers the issue of how much sunshine is necessary to maintain healthy Vitamin D levels.



The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)

www.bom.gov.au/info/about_uv.html

The BOM Web site provides an explanation of the UV (ultraviolet) Index, how it is calculated and what it means to us, in terms of danger levels for exposure. The UV Index is an easy way of describing the danger each day of exposure to the sun's rays. There are links to the different formats that the UV forecast is presented in — map, graph and table — each with a clear explanation of what it means in terms of risk.

Sun protection products

www.stingray.com.au

Stingray is a company that manufactures sun protection clothing: UV swimwear, sunsuits, hats, sunscreen and much more. They even sell footwear, which not only protects your feet from the sun, but also from that burning hot sand. They have items suitable for babies, kids and adults, with much of it providing the highest level of sun protection at SPF50+.

Creative writing

Let the creative juices flow!

Get Writing

www.bbc.co.uk/dna/getwriting

This Web site is a fantastic resource for writers of all levels. Hosted by the BBC in the UK, it offers a variety of free mini courses for beginners, intermediate and advanced writers. There is also a section called The Craft, where you can read articles by top writers on a whole range of genres. There are also stories, scripts and poetry to read, written by Get Writing members, and you can watch and listen as authors share their experiences with you on video and audio.

Allen & Unwin

www.allenandunwin.com/writing/home.asp

Allen & Unwin, the Australian book publisher, has put together a Writing Centre to assist writers and aspiring writers. It hosts extracts from bestselling writing guides that you can access for free, any time you need a bit of help. Topics covered include: Why write?, Getting started, Tips on techniques, and Writing genres. There is also information on getting published and some advice from published authors. There is a writers' message board you can join, where you can share tips and advice or discuss aspects of your writing with others, and there's a newsletter you can subscribe to.

About.com

<http://fictionwriting.about.com/od/writingexercises>

About.com is a great resource for information on just about any topic, and creative writing is no exception. On these pages, you'll find some exercises to help get you started and others to improve specific areas of your writing. For example, there are suggestions for generating new short story ideas, 10 New Year's resolutions for writers and an exercise for creating your own metaphors. You'll also discover an



The Top 30 is also published on the NetGuide Web site (www.netguide.com.au) in the Sites and Services section each month, allowing you to click through to each site without typing in the URLs.

interesting way to test out a new story idea and a freewriting exercise designed to get those words flowing, plus some handy advice and tips from seasoned writers.

Online course

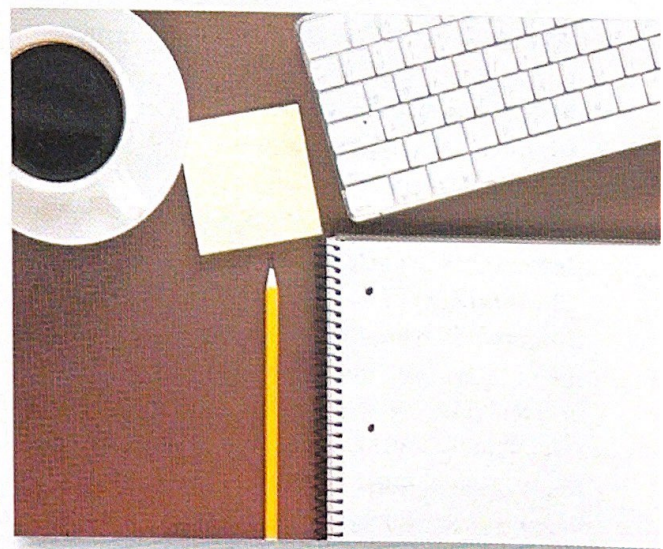
www.suite101.com/course.cfm/16712/seminar

This is a complete, free online course for anyone who would like to learn how to write. It is easy to follow and fun, with simple exercises at the end of each section to help you put into practice what you've learnt. From why and what to write, through ideas, plot and themes, dialogue and character building, you'll have a great time learning the craft of creative writing.

Prompts

www.creativewritingprompts.com

It's all very easy to say 'just start writing', but if you seriously have no idea where to start, you'll find this site extremely helpful. It hosts 203 creative writing prompts and ideas to get you started. Just hover your mouse over a number and an idea pops up — let's hope a few of them get those creative juices flowing again.



Christmas cocktails

Make yours a 'merry' Christmas.

Champagne cocktails

www.drinks.mixer.com/cat/9

If you'd like to add an extra sparkle to your champagne this Christmas, why not try a champagne cocktail? There are over 200 recipes on this site, all requiring some champagne in the mix. Choose from exotic names such as Bolli Stolti, Fizzy Fuzzy Navel, Kir Royale and more. There's even a recipe for the classic champagne cocktail — with cognac, Angostura Bitters and sugar. Cheers!

Drinknation.com

www.drinknation.com/theme/Christmas

This is a Canadian Web site, so some of the cocktails may be more suitable for cooler Christmas weather, but with our climate, you can never be sure what sort of day we'll have. Either way, we're sure you'll find something appealing. They're all pretty easy to make, too — the instructions are as straightforward as 'shake all ingredients with ice'. They have inspiring names such as Candy Cane, Christmas Bellringer, North Pole cocktail and many more.

New to cocktails?

www.cocktails.foryou.com.au

If you've never tried making cocktails before, but would like to have a go this Christmas, this is a good place to start. It introduces you to cocktails, what they are, how to make them, the essential ingredients, equipment and so on. But don't be daunted; it's fairly down to earth! When you've read enough, feast your eyes on the Cocktail Gallery — there are some gorgeous pictures of colourful cocktails that you could be serving to your guests this Christmas. And



if there's a particular cocktail you've always wanted to make, use the search feature to find the recipe.

Mocktails

www.cdktichen.com/recipes/cat/380/0.shtml

If you don't drink alcohol, or if you're the designated driver, it doesn't mean you can't enjoy a cocktail this Christmas. On this site, you'll find a whole selection of delicious-sounding cocktail recipes without a drop of alcohol in sight. There's a non-alcoholic Pina Colada, a mock champagne recipe, one called Abstinence on the Beach and there's even a special Christmas cocktail so you can really join in the celebrations.

Christmas nibbles

www.abc.net.au/nightlife/stories/s1508851.htm

If you're planning a bit of a Christmas cocktail party, you'll no doubt want to serve up some tasty nibbles. There are some very simple ideas here on the ABC's Nightlife Web site. They include Mango Prawns, Smoked Salmon on Cucumber, Apricots and Blue Cheese, and Spinach and Fetta tarts — yummm. Serve some of those up with your cocktails and it'll be a party to remember.

Christmas craft for kids

Crafty ideas for Christmas.

Table decorations

www.kidsdomain.com/craft/_xtable.html

Would you like to make some special decorations for your Christmas table this year? This site will show you how to make placemats, napkin holders, coasters for drinks, candleholders, place cards and more. If you've got a younger brother or sister, there's even an easy project for them — a Candy Tree — that should keep them occupied while you get on with the harder stuff.

Christmas crafts

<http://familyfun.go.com/arts-and-crafts/season/specialfeature/christmas-crafts-ms>

You can find out how to make some really lovely decorations on this site, including a snow angel, some merry mice and a soapy snowman. Or would you rather make something you can eat? Well, there are recipes and ideas for all sort of goodies — a sugar chalet, a lollipop tree and an edible polar bear, to name just a few. Or maybe Christmas stockings are more to your liking — there's a whole range of ideas for those, too.

Make-Stuff

<http://www.make-stuff.com/holidays/christmas.html>

There are so many ideas on this site that you'll have trouble choosing. Some are only accessible to subscribers, but there are plenty of free ones, some of which are particularly suitable for children (marked with red figures). The craft ideas are sorted into categories such as gift ideas, decorating, ornaments and more. Some of them have great pictures, showing you what the end product should look like — check out the Recycled CDs Christmas Wreath and Fluffy the Snowman; they look lovely.

Danielle's Place

www.daniellesplace.com/html/christmas.html

This site has some beautiful Christmas decorations and gifts you can make and they're all accompanied by a picture, which should help you choose which ones you want to try. There are all sorts of angels, reindeer, snowmen and more, plus links to other craft pages and craft sites — now that should keep you busy! Please note that these craft ideas are copyright and for personal use only.

Enchanted Learning

www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/christmas

There are some great ideas for decorations on the Enchanted Learning site that you can make using very simple material like paper plates, brown paper bags and pipe cleaners. You can also learn how to make a few different sorts of Christmas cards, including a pop-up one. And for something a bit different, there are some fun activity books you can print out, which should keep you busy counting, colouring and drawing until Santa comes your way.



Homegrown

The best local sites for the month.

e-tail with a twist

www.zazz.com.au

The Zazz site has a new take on online retailing: it just sells one product for one day — every day. Its site motto of 'One Day. One Thing. One Chance.' sums up the whole process. There's a set number of each daily product, which is available until the end of that day or until the stock is exhausted, whichever comes first, and a clock on the home page counts down the time

left to purchase. The products cover a range of interests.

Sign up for the e-newsletter to be notified of each day's offering.

New Web sites

www.blackstump.com.au

The Beyond the Black Stump site lists interesting new

Web sites from Australia and the world. You can view the latest 50 sites to be listed, or

if you are new to the site, you can go back and view the last 200 new sites.

Alternatively, you can browse sites by subject over a longer period. The site is updated weekly and you can sign up to get email notification when the next 50 sites are added. This is a great way to discover some new and interesting places to visit on the Net.

Reptile heaven

www.aussiereptilekeeper.com

If snakes and lizards are your thing, then you'll love this site. You'll find data sheets on every

Send your Top 30 site nominations to:

netguide@acpmagazines.com.au

Australian reptile you could think of, plus comprehensive coverage on how to care for each one. You can also participate in live chat with other reptile enthusiasts or post or answer questions in the forums, which are divided into categories by species. Aussie Reptile Keeper also has links to other sites of interest to reptile lovers.

Home renovation

www.homeatyellow.com.au

If home renovations are on your agenda over the summer break, take a look at the new renovation advice section of the Yellow Pages online. You'll find handy tips and advice, checklists, an area to keep your notes on your project as it progresses, and you can even ask an expert. Categories covered are bathrooms and laundry, kitchens, bedroom and living, garden and outdoor living, pools and spas, and general home projects.

Trash and treasure

www.freecycle.org

This site is a real find, whether you're looking to offload unwanted items or scrounging for cheap furniture for your home. The Freecycle community comprises many local groups around Australia and the world with almost 3 million members worldwide. If you sign up, you can browse the items on offer and contact the current owners to arrange pickup. If you want to get rid of items, you can send an email to the Freecycle members in your local area via the site. You can also nominate when listing an item that you want it to go to a non-profit organisation. If there's not a Freecycle group already in your area, why not start your own — the site tells you how. NetGuide





Broadband directory

The following table is a guide to choosing the ISP that's right for you. It features a mix of best deals from some smaller ISPs and the offerings of the bigger, well-known players. The prices of these plans were accurate as stated on the providers' Web sites at the time of writing, however, *NetGuide* assumes no responsibility for vendor error, and we haven't tested the providers' service and support. So, before signing up we suggest you check pricing, and terms and conditions carefully, and shop around and ask other users (try forums such as <http://forums.whirlpool.net.au>).

Broadband plans

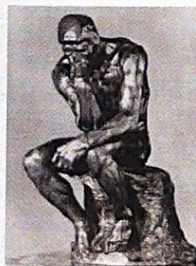
Sub-\$20 plans

| ISP | Monthly fee | Monthly download limit | Download excess penalty | Notes |
|--------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Spin H2A 200MB Starter | \$19.99 | 200M | Speed reduction | Only available as a starter option |
| Dodo ADSL 256K 70MB | \$9.90 | 70M | 18c per megabyte | Includes phone bundling |
| Web Ace 256K 200M | \$19.95 | 200M | 10c per megabyte | Includes phone bundling |
| CyberOne AdslStarter-Special 6 | \$15.95 | 200M | 14c per megabyte | |
| Spacelink Trainer 256 | \$19.95 | 200M | 15c per megabyte | Includes phone bundling |

Sub-\$30 plans

| ISP | Monthly fee | Monthly download limit | Download excess penalty | Notes |
|--------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| TSN Internet Flat 256K | \$29.95 | No set limit | Speed reduction | Speed reduction based on overall user patterns |
| Bit.Net 256 Ruby Bundle | \$29.95 | 10G | Speed reduction | Includes phone bundling |
| NetXP Value5 | \$29.90 | 5G | Speed reduction | |
| iiNet Broadband2+ Basic +Phone | \$29.95 | 1.5G | Speed reduction | Includes phone bundling, high speed internet requires proximity to an iiNet DSLAM |
| Wild Internet Soho 256-200 | \$24.95 | 200M | Speed reduction | Includes phone bundling |
| iPrimus Light | \$24.95 | 500M | Speed reduction | Includes phone bundling |

Thinking of Bundling ADSL and VoIP?



- Super fast ADSL
- 10c untrimed calls
- Free VOIP Phone
- Special NetGuide offer-\$20 off the first month
- All in one bill from \$50 per month



1300 731 368 <http://empcom.net/voip.php>

Mid-range plans

| ISP | Monthly fee | Monthly download limit | Download excess penalty | Notes |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Internode Home 512 Starter | \$39.95 | 8G | Speed reduction | |
| AAPT 512K Plus Bundle | \$39 | 12G | Speed Reduction | Includes phone bundling |
| Vintek 512K Amber | \$39.95 | 8G | Speed Reduction | |
| Brown Bear Internet 512K | \$39.95 | 5G | Speed reduction; \$3 per gigabyte | Includes phone bundling |
| Netspace 256 Extreme | \$39.95 | 10G | Speed reduction | |

High-bandwidth plans

| ISP | Monthly fee | Monthly download limit | Download excess penalty | Notes |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Internode Home 1500 Value | \$69.95 | 20G | Speed reduction | |
| TSN Internet Flat 1.5MB | \$69.95 | N/A | Shaped | Shaping is based on profiles of users on a nightly basis |
| Vintek 1500K Brass | \$69.95 | 20G | Speed reduction | |
| AAPT 1500K Ultimate Bundle | \$59 | 15G | Speed reduction | Includes phone bundling |
| TPG ADSL2+ Heavy | \$59.99 | 30G | Speed reduction | |
| AdamDirect Super | \$69.95 | 40G | Speed reduction | |

* Note: Some high-speed, high-bandwidth plans require proximity to relevant DSL facilities. Check with your ISP for availability.

Wireless plans

| ISP | Monthly fee | Monthly download limit | Download excess penalty | Notes |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| GoldenIT 512/128 WireFree | \$59.95 | 10G | 15c per megabyte, capped at \$99 | Victoria/NSW only |
| Chilli Internet Intro Lite | \$29.95 | 200M | 12c per megabyte, speed reduction | Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne only |
| Unwired Break Free 256 | \$39.95 | 2G | Speed reduction | Sydney area only |
| Telstra Wireless Broadband 256Kbps 1G | \$44.95 | 1G | 0.15c per megabyte | Sydney, Melbourne, Gold Coast only, Desktop modem only |
| Pacific Internet Wireless 512K 500MB | \$49.95 | 500M | 14.9c per megabyte | Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne only |
| Spin 11B Deluxe Business 1GB | \$49.95 | 1G | 10c per megabyte | Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne only |

Cable plans

| ISP | Monthly fee | Monthly download limit | Download excess penalty | Notes |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| OptusNet Power | \$79.95 | 20G Peak/40G off-peak | Speed reduction | Limited metro areas only |
| Telstra BigPond Unlimited Extreme | \$79.95 | 10G | Speed reduction | Limited metro areas only |

Contact details

| ISP | Web | Phone | ISP | Web | Phone |
|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| AAPT | www.aapt.com.au/internet | 138 888 | NetXP | http://netxp.com.au | (07) 4669 6479 |
| Adam Internet | http://adsl2.adam.com.au | (08) 8423 4000 | Optus | www.optus.com.au | 1800 504 504 |
| Brown Bear Internet | www.brownbear.net.au | 1300 785 956 | Pacific Internet | www.pacific.net.au | 133 635 |
| BIT.net | www.bit.net.au | 1300 248 638 | SpaceLink | www.spacelink.com.au | (03) 9857 0800 |
| Chilli Internet | www.chilli.net.au | 1300 655 554 | Spin Internet Services | www.spin.net.au | 1300 300 324 |
| CyberOne | www.cyberone.com.au | 1300 720 062 | Telstra BigPond | www.bigpond.com | 131 282 |
| Dodo | www.dodo.com.au | 131 602 | TPG | www.tpg.com.au | 1300 360 855 |
| GoldenIT | www.goldenit.net.au | (03) 9018 6363 | TSN Internet | www.tsninternet.com.au | 131 486 |
| iiNet | www.iinet.net.au | 131 917 | Unwired | www.unwired.com.au | 1300 761 881 |
| Internode | www.internode.on.net | 136 633 | Vintek | www.vintek.net | (08) 8523 2104 |
| iPrimus | www.iprimus.com.au | 1300 850 000 | Web Ace | www.webace.com.au | 1800 202 012 |
| Netspace | www.netspace.net.au | 131 456 | Wild Internet | www.wilddsl.com.au | 1800 809 453 |

Directory

For more listings go to www.netguide.com.au/siteguide

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HM-2029 \$10.00

HM-2014 \$10.00

HM-2027 \$10.00

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HM-2031 \$10.00

HM-2002 \$12.00

HM-2004 \$12.00

HM-2005 \$15.50

USB Net Phone with Screen Display

- Selection of ring tones
- Built in hold function
- Displays contact list, dialled calls, incoming calls, missed calls, send voice email, skype out balance checking
- Quick buttons setting, audio message setting, language choice
- Plug and play, fully compatible with SKYPE
- LCD display screen



PD-250 \$38.00

USB Net Phones

- Supports Skype, Net2Phone, MSN, SJ Phone, X-LINE and more
- With keypad and ringer, crystal clear sound effect
- USB1.1 compatible - no external power required
- PC to PC and PC to Phone operation
- Function support: adjustable volume, page turning and contact lists



PD-222 \$38.00

PD-227 \$18.00

USB Car Charger

- Multi-function USB car charger, 4 USB ports and 1 DC port, can be charge for most products
- DC 12V-24V of the car will transform into 6V-7V
- DC port is used for various serial mobiles such as Nokia, Samsung, Motorola, Sony Ericsson



PD-100 \$10.00

IPOD Car Charger

- Works with 12V auto cigarette lighter
- Circuitry design protects your iPod from overcharging and short-circuiting
- Charge and listen to your iPod at the same time
- Comes with a fully retractable and white coil cord



PD-160 \$10.00

Negative-ion Generator

- Creates ions and puts them into air and by removing mildew, dust and smoke to improve air quality
- Increase the concentration of negative ions in the air and produces trillions of the ions per second



PD-080 \$15.00

USB Portable Floppy Drive



\$29.00

USB 2.0 + 1394 Combo 3.5" HDD Case



\$38.00

SATA External HDD Case



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3.5" \$38.00

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- USB 2.0 multcard reader with one front panel USB 2.0 from MB
- Black or Beige available



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Internal 5.25" Card Reader

- Easy front panel access
- USB 2.0 multcard reader with 6.1CH audio port from MB
- 2 x USB 2.0 port from MB
- 1 x 1394 port from MB
- Available in silver



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PCI USB 2.0 Card



4-Port \$15.00

PCI Firewire Card



4-Port \$18.00

SATA PCI Card



2-Port \$23.00

PCMCIA 10/100 Lan Card



\$20.00

PCMCIA Card



Firewire \$32.00
USB 2.0 \$32.00

Notebook Cooler Pad

Twin fan

\$20.00



Tri fan \$29.00

USB Sound Card



\$10.00

USB to RJ45 Network Adapter



\$16.00

USB 2.0 External HDD Case



2.5" \$15.00
3.5" \$25.00
5.25" \$48.00

24 in 1 USB 2.0 Card Reader



\$15.00ea

USB Fan, USB Light



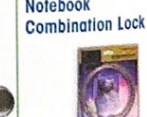
\$15.00ea

1 x White LED, 1 x Red Laser Diode, 1 x PDA Stylus Pen



\$2.30

Notebook Combination Lock



\$10.00

Slimline Clam CD Cases



10PK \$2.50

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Saves storage space



100PK \$3.50

CD Case



40PCS \$3.90
80PCS \$4.90
128PCS \$8.90

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Built in microphone Ideal for gaming



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30m \$26.00
100m \$29.00

4-Port USB Hub



USB 1.1 \$8.50
USB 2.0 with power supply \$18.00

USB to PS/2 Splitter Cable



\$10.00

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- A4 (210 x 297mm)...\$16.90 TPP2811

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Canon Ink Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|----------|---------|--------|
| BCI-24BK | \$14.00 | \$5.60 |
| BCI-24C | \$33.00 | \$7.20 |

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|----------|---------|---------|
| BX-3 | \$49.00 | \$28.00 |
| BC-02 | \$39.00 | \$28.00 |
| BC-03 | \$38.00 | \$28.00 |
| BC-05 | \$50.00 | \$30.00 |
| BC-20 | \$49.00 | \$28.00 |
| BCI-3eBK | \$25.00 | \$ 8.80 |

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|------------|---------|--------|
| BCI-3eC/MY | \$19.00 | \$6.40 |
| BCI-6BK | \$24.00 | \$6.40 |
| BCI-6C/MY | \$24.00 | \$6.40 |
| BCI-6G | \$24.00 | \$6.40 |
| BCI-6R | \$24.00 | \$6.40 |
| BCI-6PC/PM | \$24.00 | \$6.40 |

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|----------|---------|--------|
| BCI-15BK | \$24.00 | \$6.40 |
| BCI-15C | \$44.00 | \$7.20 |
| BCI-16C | \$44.00 | \$7.20 |
| BCI-21BK | \$13.00 | \$4.90 |
| BCI-21C | \$28.00 | \$6.40 |

NEW! Canon Models

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|-----------|---------|--------|
| PGI-5BK | \$22.50 | \$8.50 |
| CLI-8BK | \$22.50 | \$8.50 |
| CLI-8C/MY | \$22.50 | \$8.50 |
| CLI-8PC | \$22.50 | \$8.50 |
| CLI-8PM | \$22.50 | \$8.50 |

Epson Ink Cartridges

| Model | TONNY |
|-------|---------|
| T001 | \$18.90 |
| T003 | \$ 9.90 |
| T005 | \$18.00 |
| T007 | \$ 9.30 |
| T008 | \$13.00 |
| T009 | \$15.00 |
| T013 | \$ 4.50 |
| T014 | \$ 7.90 |
| T017 | \$ 9.70 |
| T018 | \$10.60 |
| T026 | \$ 9.70 |
| T027 | \$12.40 |
| T028 | \$ 9.70 |
| T029 | \$10.60 |

| Model | TONNY |
|-------------|---------|
| T038 | \$ 9.60 |
| T039 | \$10.60 |
| T0321 | \$10.80 |
| T0322 | \$ 7.50 |
| T0323 | \$ 7.50 |
| T0324 | \$ 7.50 |
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| T0494/5/6 | \$ 8.90 |
| T0540/1/2 | \$ 8.90 |
| T0541/2/3/4 | \$ 8.90 |
| T0547/8/9 | \$ 8.90 |

HP Ink Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|---------------------|---------|---------|
| 51625A (#25) | \$46.00 | \$28.00 |
| 51626A (#26) | \$46.00 | \$28.00 |
| 51629A (#29) | \$46.00 | \$28.00 |
| 51633MA (#33) | \$41.00 | \$32.00 |
| 51645A (#45) | \$46.00 | \$24.00 |
| 51649A (#49) | \$48.00 | \$28.00 |
| C1823D (#23) | \$51.00 | \$30.00 |
| C4841/2/3/4AA (#10) | \$46.00 | \$28.00 |
| C4836/7/8A (#11) | \$48.00 | \$18.00 |
| C5010DA (#14) | \$47.00 | \$26.00 |
| C5011DA (#14) | \$35.00 | \$24.00 |
| C6578D (#78) | \$51.00 | \$30.00 |
| C6614A (#20) | \$44.00 | \$24.00 |
| C6615DA (#15) | \$44.00 | \$24.00 |

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|-------------------|---------|---------|
| C6625A (#17) | \$48.00 | \$30.00 |
| C6656AA (#56) | \$32.00 | \$24.00 |
| C6657AA (#57) | \$51.00 | \$32.00 |
| C6658AA (#58) | \$37.00 | \$26.00 |
| C8727A (#27) | \$31.00 | \$24.00 |
| C8728AA (#28) | \$35.00 | \$26.00 |
| C8765WA (#94) | \$31.00 | \$27.00 |
| C8767WA (#96) | \$42.00 | \$33.00 |
| C9363WA (#97) | \$45.00 | \$36.00 |
| C8721WA (#02) | \$28.00 | \$16.00 |
| C8771/2/3WA (#02) | \$16.00 | \$11.00 |
| C8774/5WA (#02) | \$16.00 | \$11.00 |
| C9351AA (#21) | \$24.00 | \$21.00 |
| C9352AA (#22) | \$27.00 | \$23.00 |

Brother Ink Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|-----------|---------|--------|
| LC-21BK | \$30.00 | \$7.90 |
| LC-21C/MY | \$17.00 | \$7.50 |
| LC-02BK | \$21.00 | \$7.90 |
| LC-02C/MY | \$11.00 | \$7.50 |
| LC-04BK | \$28.00 | \$7.90 |
| LC-04C/MY | \$16.00 | \$7.50 |
| LC-47BK | \$32.00 | \$7.90 |
| LC-47C/MY | \$18.50 | \$7.50 |

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|------------|---------|--------|
| LC-800BK | \$32.00 | \$7.90 |
| LC-800C/MY | \$18.50 | \$7.50 |

Ink refill kits for Canon, Lexmark, HP and Epson

from \$490

Lexmark Ink Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|---------|---------|---------|
| 12A1970 | \$48.00 | \$32.00 |
| 12A1980 | \$56.00 | \$35.00 |
| 17G0050 | \$46.00 | \$32.00 |
| 17G0060 | \$53.00 | \$35.00 |
| 13400HC | \$53.00 | \$36.00 |
| 13619HC | \$52.00 | \$38.00 |
| 10N0217 | \$33.00 | --- |
| 10N0227 | \$35.00 | --- |

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|---------------|---------|---------|
| 10N0016 (#16) | \$46.00 | \$36.00 |
| 10N0026 (#26) | \$49.00 | \$39.00 |
| 15M0120 (#20) | \$53.00 | \$41.00 |
| 18C0031 (#31) | \$43.00 | \$35.00 |
| 18C0034 (#34) | \$43.00 | \$35.00 |
| 18C0035 (#35) | \$45.00 | \$37.00 |
| 18L0032 (#82) | \$47.00 | \$39.00 |
| 18L0042 (#83) | \$53.00 | \$41.00 |

HP Black Toner Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 92298A | \$139.00 | \$ 65.00 |
| C3906AF | \$ 95.00 | \$ 49.00 |
| C3903A | \$120.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| C3909A | \$220.00 | \$ 95.00 |
| C4092A | \$ 87.00 | \$ 49.00 |
| C4096A | \$135.00 | \$ 65.00 |
| C4127A | \$145.00 | \$ 65.00 |
| C4127X | \$169.00 | \$ 80.00 |
| C4129X | \$210.00 | \$ 95.00 |
| C4182X | \$239.00 | \$135.00 |
| C7115A | \$ 89.00 | \$ 49.00 |
| C7115X | \$115.00 | \$ 65.00 |

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|--------|----------|----------|
| C8061X | \$165.00 | \$ 85.00 |
| Q1338A | \$189.00 | \$ 95.00 |
| Q2612A | \$ 95.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| Q2613A | \$ 95.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| Q2613X | \$125.00 | \$ 69.00 |
| Q2610A | \$155.00 | \$ 75.00 |
| Q2624A | \$ 96.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| Q5942A | \$190.00 | \$ 95.00 |
| Q5942X | \$279.00 | \$125.00 |
| Q5949A | \$ 99.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| Q5949X | \$169.00 | \$ 75.00 |
| Q6511A | \$169.00 | \$105.00 |

TONNY Colour Toner Cartridges

| Printer Model | Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
| HP LJ1500/2500, Canon LBP2410 | C9700A (BK) | \$115.00 | \$ 65.00 |
| | C9701/2/3A (CYM) | \$135.00 | \$ 79.00 |
| HP LJ4600 | C9720A (BK) | \$199.00 | \$155.00 |
| | C9721/2/3A (CYM) | \$262.00 | \$185.00 |
| HP LJ4500, Canon LBP2460/2040 | C4191A (BK) | \$119.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| | C4192/3/4A (CMY) | \$165.00 | \$ 69.00 |
| HP LJ8000 | C4149A (BK) | \$150.00 | \$ 89.00 |
| | C4150/1/2A (CMY) | \$225.00 | \$155.00 |
| Epson C900/1900 | S050100 (BK) | \$ 99.00 | \$ 79.00 |
| | S050097/98/99 (CMY) | \$210.00 | \$119.00 |
| Epson C1000/C2000 | S050033 (BK) | \$119.00 | \$ 90.00 |
| | S050034/5/6 (CMY) | \$249.00 | \$119.00 |

Samsung Toner

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|------------|----------|----------|
| ML-1210D3 | \$ 94.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| ML-1650D8 | \$185.00 | \$105.00 |
| ML-1710D3 | \$ 98.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| ML-2010 | \$103.00 | \$ 59.00 |
| ML-2150D8 | \$185.00 | \$140.00 |
| ML-4100D3 | \$ 99.00 | \$ 83.00 |
| ML-4500D3 | \$119.00 | \$ 73.00 |
| ML-6060D6 | \$155.00 | \$ 93.00 |
| SCX-4216D3 | \$ 99.00 | \$ 69.00 |
| SCX-5312D6 | \$ 95.00 | \$ 79.00 |
| SF-5100D3 | \$ 89.00 | \$ 59.00 |

Brother Toner Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|---------|----------|---------|
| TN-100 | \$ 29.00 | \$23.00 |
| TN-200 | \$ 42.00 | \$23.00 |
| TN-2025 | \$ 74.00 | \$59.00 |
| TN-300 | \$ 42.00 | \$23.00 |
| TN-3060 | \$125.00 | \$65.00 |
| TN-8000 | \$ 43.00 | \$23.00 |
| TN-6600 | \$ 99.00 | \$65.00 |
| TN-7600 | \$125.00 | \$65.00 |

Canon Toner Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|----------|----------|---------|
| EP-22 | \$ 99.00 | \$49.00 |
| EP-25 | \$ 99.00 | \$49.00 |
| EP-26 | \$109.00 | \$69.00 |
| EP-32 | \$145.00 | \$65.00 |
| EP-52 | \$185.00 | \$80.00 |
| E-31 | \$189.00 | \$85.00 |
| FX-3 | \$132.00 | \$59.00 |
| CART-303 | \$ 83.00 | \$59.00 |
| CART-U | \$ 99.00 | \$69.00 |

Epson Toner Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|----------|----------|---------|
| EPL-5700 | \$190.00 | \$49.00 |
| EPL-5900 | \$205.00 | \$49.00 |
| EPL-6200 | \$215.00 | \$49.00 |

Lexmark Toner Cartridges

| Model | Genuine | TONNY |
|------------|----------|---------|
| Optra E210 | \$129.00 | \$59.00 |
| Optra E310 | \$225.00 | \$69.00 |
| Optra E/E+ | \$135.00 | \$59.00 |
| X215 | \$105.00 | \$59.00 |

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DEAL 1 - BCI-3e / BCI-6 Series
(Colours include: Black, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Photo-Cyan, Photo-Magenta, Red, Green)



| | | |
|---|------|------------------|
|  | Only | Only |
| (A) Any 4 | \$28 | (D) Any 12 \$80 |
| (B) Any 8 | \$56 | (E) Any 16 \$104 |
| (C) Any 10 | \$68 | |

DEAL 2 - BCI-21 / BCI-24 Series
(Black, Colour ink tanks)

| | | | | |
|---|--------|------------|---------|------|
|  | Blacks | Only | Colours | Only |
| (A) Any 2 | \$11 | (E) Any 2 | \$14 | |
| (B) Any 5 | \$27 | (F) Any 5 | \$35 | |
| (C) Any 8 | \$43 | (G) Any 8 | \$54 | |
| (D) Any 10 | \$54 | (H) Any 10 | \$65 | |


BC/ BX Series
Remanufactured Cartridges

NEW - BCI-15 / BCI-16 Series Ink Tanks

| | | | | |
|---|-------|------|---------|------|
|  | | Only | | Only |
| | BC-02 | \$32 | BCI-15B | \$7 |
| | BC-03 | \$32 | BCI-15C | \$8 |
| | BC-05 | \$35 | BCI-16C | \$8 |
|  | BC-20 | \$32 | | |
| | BX-3 | \$32 | | |

DEAL 8 -
PGI-5Bk, CLI-8Bk / 8C / 8M / 8Y
8PC / 8PM

(Non-chipped cartridges - Instructions for use included!)

| | |
|---|-------|
|  | Only |
| (A) Any 5 | \$50 |
| (B) Any 10 | \$95 |
| (C) Any 15 | \$135 |

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Only

Only

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PG-40

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CLI-8M

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PG-50

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CLI-8Y

\$22.50

CL-41

\$35.50

CL-51

\$50.50

DEAL 7 - Great Packaged Deals!

| | |
|---|-------|
|  | Only |
| (A) BCI-3eBk/ 3eC/ 3eM/ 3eY | Only |
| (1) 1 Set of 4 | \$62 |
| (2) 2 Sets of 4 | \$119 |
| (B) BCI-3eBk/ 6C/ 6M/ 6Y | Only |
| (1) 1 Set of 4 | \$75 |
| (2) 2 Sets of 4 | \$136 |
| (C) BCI-3eBk/ 6Bk/ 6C/ 6M/ 6Y | Only |
| (1) 1 Set of 5 | \$95 |
| (2) 2 Sets of 5 | \$172 |
| (D) BCI-6 Series | |
| (1) Any 4 | \$76 |
| (3) Any 8 | \$139 |
| (2) Any 6 | \$110 |
| (4) Any 12 | \$199 |

Brother® compatibles !

DEAL 6
LC-02, LC-04, LC-21
LC-47, LC-800 Series
(Black, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow)

| | | | |
|------------|-------|------------|-------|
| | Only | | Only |
| (A) Any 4 | \$36 | (D) Any 16 | \$136 |
| (B) Any 8 | \$72 | (E) Any 20 | \$159 |
| (C) Any 12 | \$104 | | |

Epson® compatibles !

DEAL 3

T0321, T0422-T0424,
T0461-T0474, T0491-T0496,
T0561-T0564, T0621-T0634,

| | |
|------------|-------|
| Only | Only |
| (A) Any 4 | \$38 |
| (B) Any 6 | \$57 |
| (C) Any 8 | \$74 |
| (D) Any 12 | \$106 |
| (E) Any 16 | \$139 |

DEAL 4

T007, T008, T009,
T017, T018, T026, T027,
T028, T029, T038, T039

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Only | Only |
| (A) 1 Bk + 1 Col | \$22 |
| (B) 2 Bk + 1 Col | \$32 |
| (C) 2 Bk + 2 Col | \$44 |
| (D) 4 Bk + 3 Col | \$74 |
| (E) 6 Blacks | \$60 |
| (F) 6 Colours | \$69 |

DEAL 5

T013, T014, T050, T051, T052,
T053, S020089, S020093,
S020108, S020110, S020187,
S020189, S020191, S020193

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Only | Only |
| (A) 1 Bk + 1 Col | \$16 |
| (B) 2 Bk + 1 Col | \$22 |
| (C) 2 Bk + 2 Col | \$32 |
| (D) 4 Bk + 3 Col | \$56 |
| (E) 6 Blacks | \$34 |
| (F) 6 Colours | \$59 |

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| T027 | \$29.95 | T0492 | \$18.95 | T0631 | \$13.95 |
| T028 | \$39.95 | T0493 | \$18.95 | T0632 | \$13.95 |
| T029 | \$38.95 | T0494 | \$18.95 | T0633 | \$13.95 |
| T038 | \$17.95 | T0495 | \$18.95 | T0634 | \$13.95 |
| T039 | \$27.95 | T0496 | \$18.95 | | |

| | | | |
|-------|---------|-------|---------|
| T0461 | \$19.95 | T0561 | \$14.95 |
| T0472 | \$12.95 | T0562 | \$14.95 |
| T0473 | \$12.95 | T0563 | \$14.95 |
| T0474 | \$12.95 | T0564 | \$14.95 |

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| 15M0120 (20) | \$38 |
| 10N0026 (26) | \$38 |
| 17G0050 (50) | \$36 |
| 17G0060 (60) | \$38 |
| 12A1970 (70) | \$36 |
| 12A1980 (80) | \$38 |
| 18L0032 (82) | \$36 |
| 18L0042 (83) | \$38 |



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|---|---|
|  | Quality New & Remanufactured Cartridges |
| Only | Only |
| C6615D (15) | \$29 |
| C6625D (17) | \$36 |
| C6614D (20) | \$30 |
| C9351AA (21) | \$20 |
| C9352AA (22) | \$22 |
| C1823D (23) | \$35 |
| 51625A (25) | \$34 |
| 51626A (26) | \$30 |
| C8727A (27) | \$27 |
| C8728A (28) | \$30 |
| 51629A (29) | \$30 |
| 51645A (45) | \$29 |
| 51649A (49) | \$34 |
| C6656A (56) | \$28 |
| C6657A (57) | \$36 |
| C6578D (78) | \$35 |
| C8765WA (94) | \$28 |
| C8766WA (95) | \$31 |
| C8767WA (96) | \$36 |
| C9363WA (97) | \$38 |

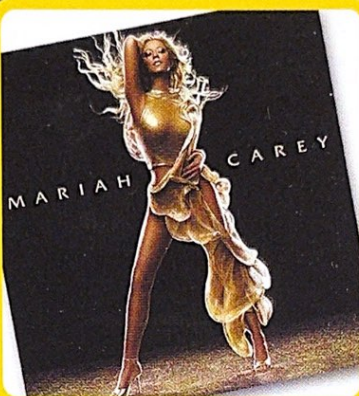
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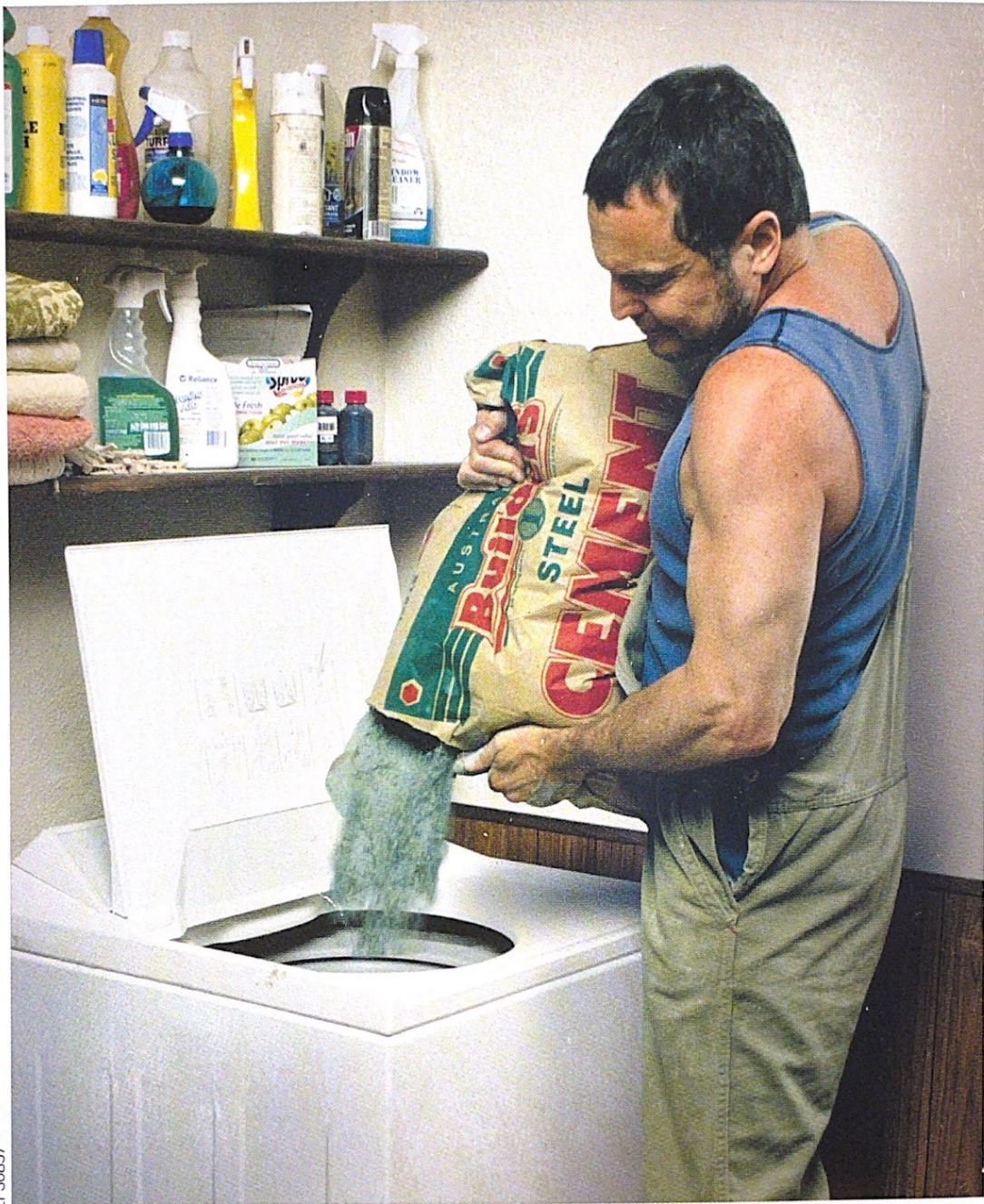
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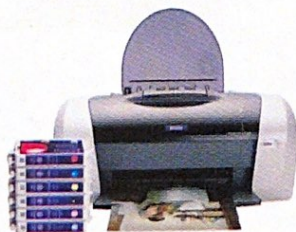
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